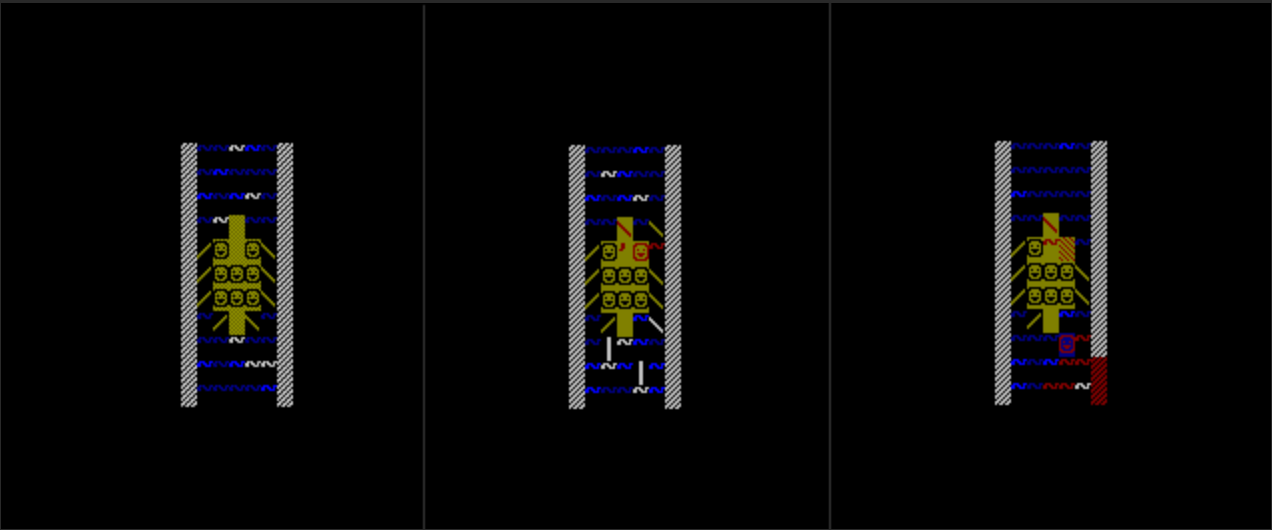


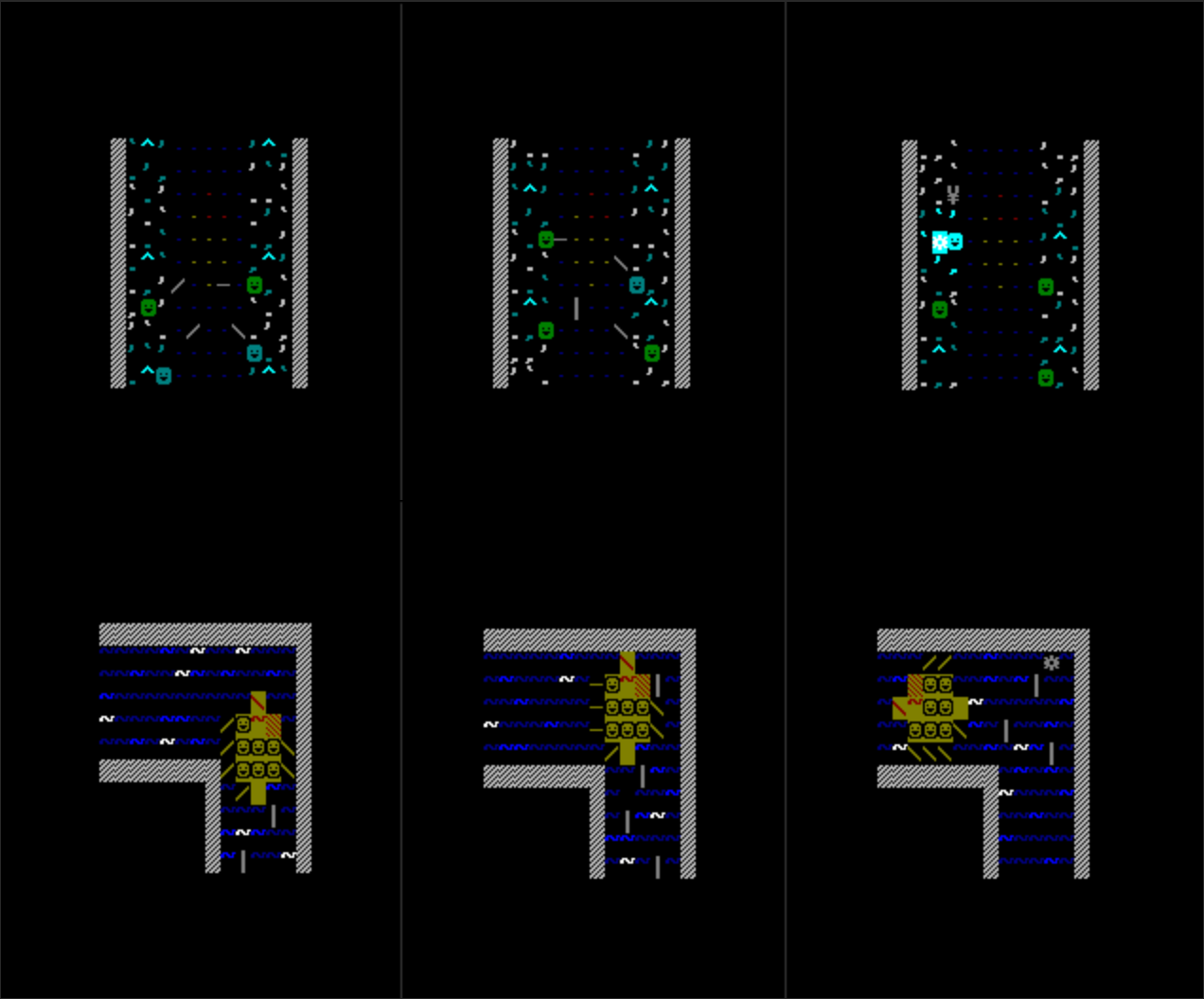
Title: **Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 08, 2009, 08:57:06 pm**



*The bolt thudded into Urist's helm with a sickening crack. The oar slipped from his fingers into the dark waters, followed soon after by the dwarf's limp corpse.*

*"Stot!" swore Fry, paddling desperately and ducking to avoid the bolts whistling through the air. "They've found us!"*

*"We noticed!" yelled one of the other crewdwarves, raising an oar just in time to deflect a bolt but losing the oar to the current dragging them along. Staccato commands in halting dwarfish battered them from above as the bolts continued to rain into the canal. Fry spared a glance to the galleries above, where hanging glass bowls of phosphorescent mush cast dim shadows upon the marksdwarves firing down on them. He grabbed Urist's bloody helmet and flung it at one of the bowls, causing it to shatter. The slurry of glowing mush splashed into one of the marksdwarves' eyes, startling him enough to drop his crossbow.*



*The boat banked heavily against the stone canal walls as it turned another corner, putting the escapees temporarily out of range of the boltfire. As the group worked to steady the boat in the freezing water, Frey looked back at the other dwarves in the boat, the memory of meeting each of them returning as his eyes crossed their faces.*

-----

I've wanted to do the tale of *Olonkulet*, or Gearabbeyes, since last year when it was mentioned in the Waterbore thread. Continuity-wise, this is set a number of years *before* that fort (which failed due to sheer frame issues of trying to pump multiple z-levels of ocean), though in the year 351.

Where Arelgolush was a penal colony, Olonkulet will have its beginnings as a group of prisoners *escaping* the Mountainhomes by boat and eventually crash-landing upon the spot where the fortress will be built.

I'm looking for six community members to take dwarves. Please choose a name, skill ranks (up to 10 available for everyone) and 200\* worth of equipment, as well as listing the crime for which you were imprisoned in the Mountainhomes. If you don't want to try and work out equipment values, just say what you'd like and I'll try and fit it in.

There will be 50 units of wood brought along, to represent the body of the boat. Other items should either be personal possessions or looted from the Mountainhomes during the escape.

I am using an extended version of Boksi's plant mod for this, but essentially no other mods.

**Worship List for The Searing Crypts**

Onol the Tin Silver - God of *Metals*

Nish the East Wanderer of Wheels - Goddess of Wealth and Trade

Gigin - Goddess of Fortresses, Minerals and War

Zas Coppercoloured the Blueness of Dye - God of Jewels

Deler the Tin Oil - God of Mountains and Caverns

Nakas - Goddess of Revelry

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**

Post by: **Enzo** on **May 08, 2009, 10:59:03 pm**

I am so down. Sounds like fun.

Urgash Bonefetish - Male

Butcher - 6  
Tanner - 6  
Bonecrafter - 7  
Leatherworker - 7  
Cook - 9

Captured and imprisoned for making Dwarven Wife Biscuits, Wife Bone Bolts, and a dapper Wife Leather Cap. At his trial Urgash noted he canceled make Wife Tallow Soap : needed lye bearing item. He managed to grab his 6 dogs (he likes dogs, OK?), 22 Dwarven Beer, 5 Cave Lobsters, and 8 dog leather before fleeing the mountainhomes.

...I think that adds up to 200. If it doesn't I fail math forever and you can just take whatever off.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**

Post by: **Broose** on **May 08, 2009, 11:21:37 pm**

Broose - Male

Competent Woodcutter  
Wrestler  
Proficient Axedwarf

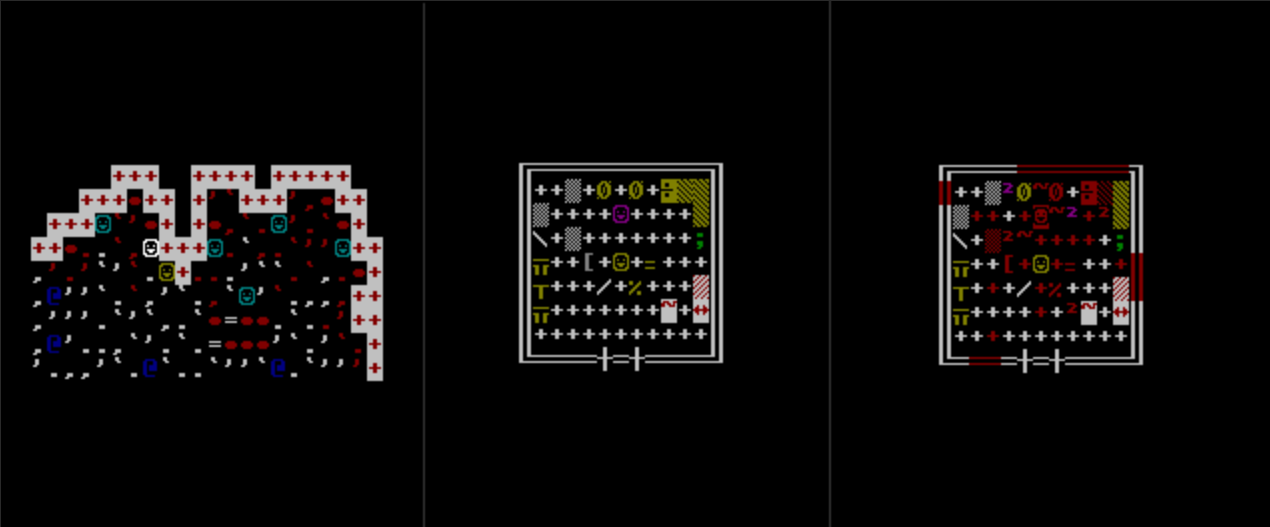
Imprisoned for Grand Theft Wagon

I am sure you can make an exception to the 200 limit rule, since we definitely need an axe.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**

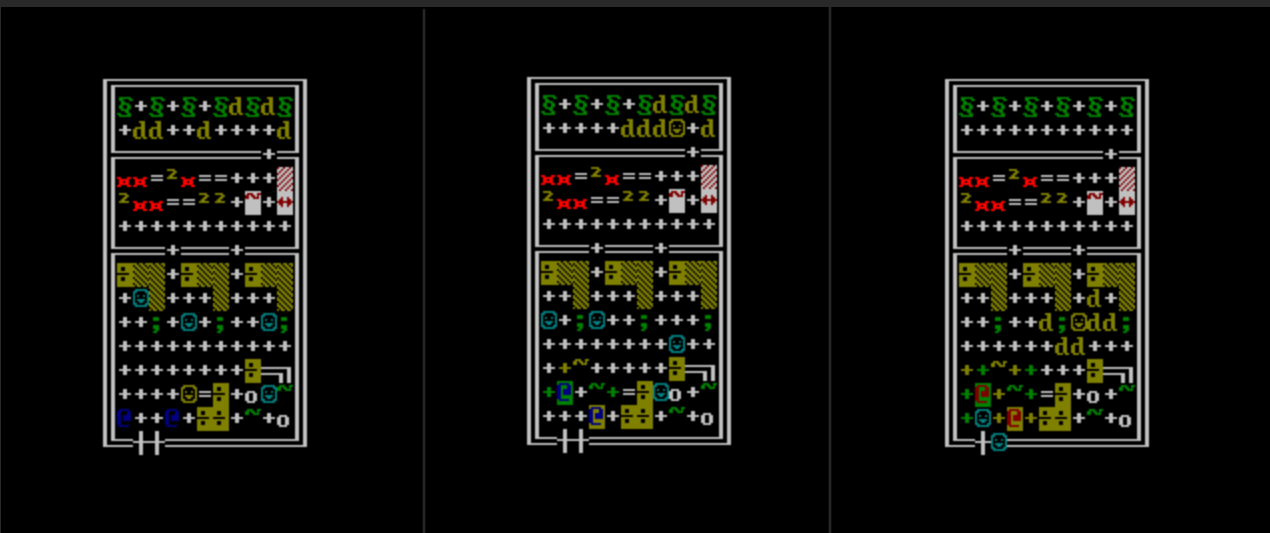
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 09, 2009, 12:41:56 am**

*Frey had first met Urgash in the chain gang during quarry duty. A recent expansion of the temple of Gigin, Goddess of Fortresses, Minerals and War, had led to a boom in bauxite demand and so the Mountainhome prison authorities had been quick to jump on a fresh opportunity. Urgash had once been the consort of a low-ranking noble in the dwarven court who had, in a moment of bloodwine-induced euphoria, mandated the construction of biscuits, bone bolts, a leather cap and tallow soap in exorbitant quantities and lumped the entire demand on her husband. After successfully manufacturing 15 of each item, Urgash's wife explained to him that there had been a miscommunication on the mandate papers and she had actually ordered 51 of each item. Urgash, being a sensible dwarf, had opted to make use of the materials at hand.*



*Although sentenced to ten strokes of the hammer for his act of both assassination and uxoricide, Urgash had actually received a stay of execution due to a quirk of dwarven law; even after taking his wife to pieces for parts, Urgash still failed to complete his work order and received a statutory sentence of three years' imprisonment. He had spent much of it in the kitchens, being a rather talented chef prior to (some would argue even during) cooking and soaping his spouse. It was in this way that Urgash had unwittingly started the gaolbreak.*

*A pair of the guards had arrived at the prison kitchens with orders to slaughter the full complement of the kitchen's dogs for the approaching Feast of Nakas. Urgash, who had grown very close to the meat animals, complained bitterly as to having them all killed and soon entered a hot argument with one of the guards, ending with Urgash being kicked to the floor. The battered dwarf immediately went silent and picked himself up, pouring two tankards of glowing ale, lacing them with glumcap dye and offering them to the guards in apology. The guards drank them down and Urgash explained that he would go attend to the dogs personally. As he left, the guards began to cough and then violently vomit, sinking to their knees as their stomachs and bowels vented their contents and soon choked to death on their own bile. Urgash returned with the six barking dogs on their leashes as the other inmates, seeing their chance, grabbed the guards' weapons and made for the doors.*



Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **[deleted]** on **May 09, 2009, 01:22:21 am**

Fath - Male

Mechanic 10  
Engraver 6  
Architect 6  
Mason 8

Imprisoned for the 'accidental' pulling of a lever connected to floodgates. The system was designed by Fath to irrigate farms. However, in this case it was used as a drowning chamber. Two dwarves were killed in the incident. In addition to the charges of murder, he destroyed several months worth of food growing in the farms which had to be replaced.

Before the escape, he managed to grab two copper nuggets, two barrels of deer meat (10 units), a barrel full of his favorite dwarven ale (25 units), a bronze crossbow (~~unfortunately with no ammo~~ just two bolts left in it ;)), a bag of ~~plump helmet~~ firecap seeds (26 units), and 3 pig tail cloth.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Danneh** on **May 09, 2009, 02:26:53 am**

Dannielle - Female (Since it looks like most of the males are taken...)

Grower - 5  
Appraiser - 5

Criminal Record -  
At the age of 5;  
-Failure to meet a Noble's demand of Bismuth Bronze items  
-Punishment 4 Hammerstrikes

At the age of 14;  
-Constant demands of changing monetary system from coins to ~~Plump Helemts~~ Firecaps.  
-Punishment 1 Hammerstrike

Unknown age;  
-Harrasment towards the king  
-Punishment Life in Prison  
-Stalking a Noble  
-Punishment 3 Hammerstrikes (Yet to be given.)

Dannielle loves ~~plump helmets~~ firecaps. Perhaps too much, as she can report the value of almost any item as a number of ~~plump helmets~~ firecaps. Makes constant suggestions to use ~~plump helmets~~ firecaps as currency instead of coins.

Brings along; 40 ~~Plump-Helmet~~ firecap seeds, 40 ~~Plump-helmets~~ firecaps

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Enzo** on **May 09, 2009, 02:55:57 am**

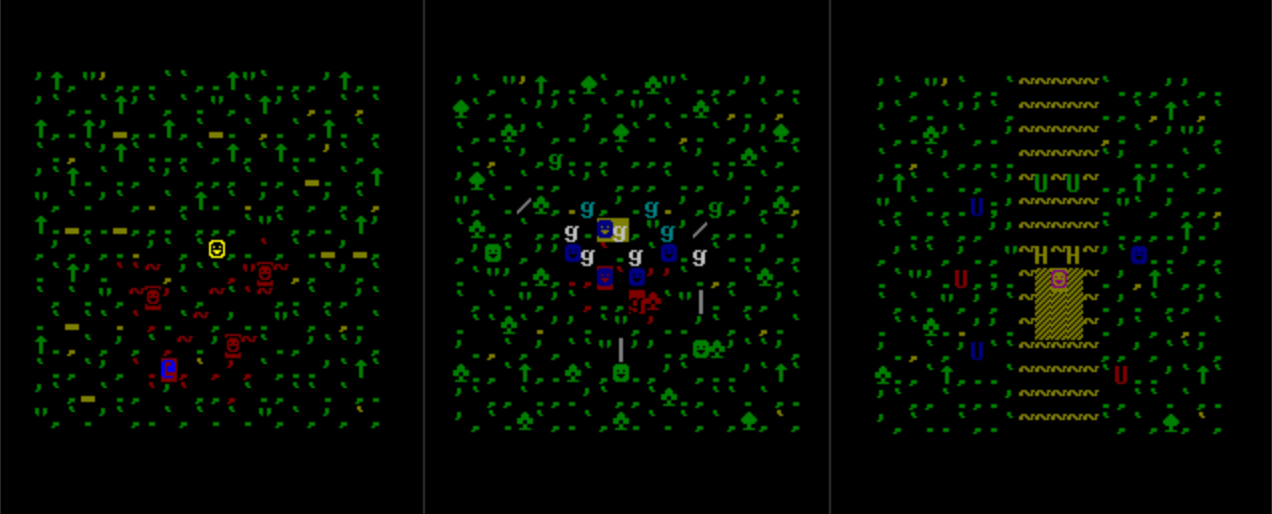
Quote from: Danneh on May 09, 2009, 02:26:53 am

Criminal Record -  
At the age of 5;  
-Failure to meet a Noble's demand of Bismuth Bronze items  
-Punishment 4 Hammerstrikes

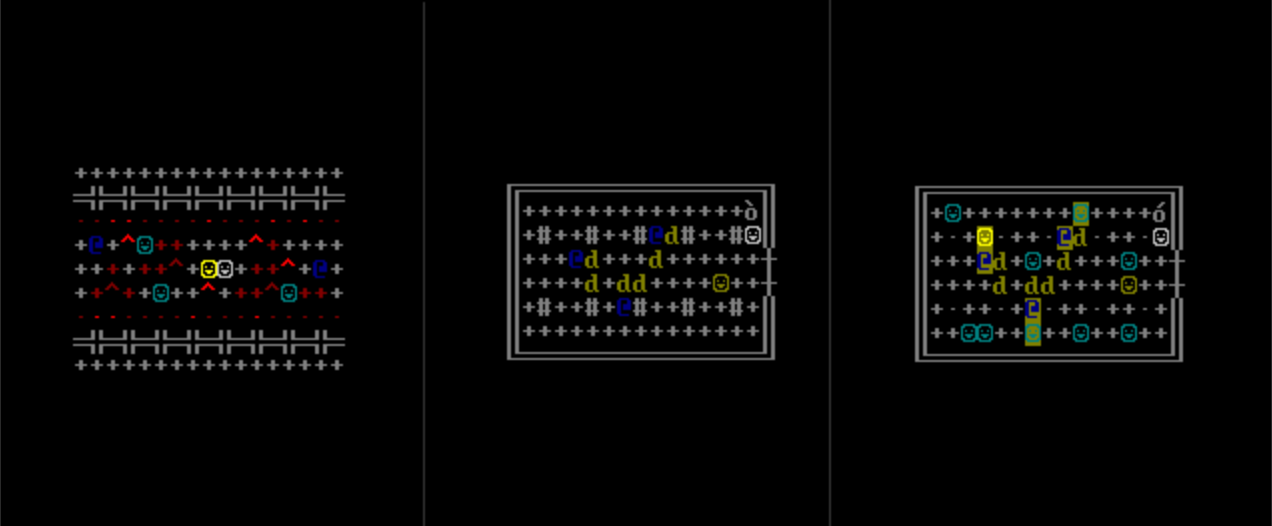
That's awesome. Better than mine. Really though, that's a lot of appraisin'. There's only so much appraising somedwarf can do.

Also, Urgash is a serious badass. A drink poisoning, dog stealing, noble consorting, biscuit making badass. The best kind.

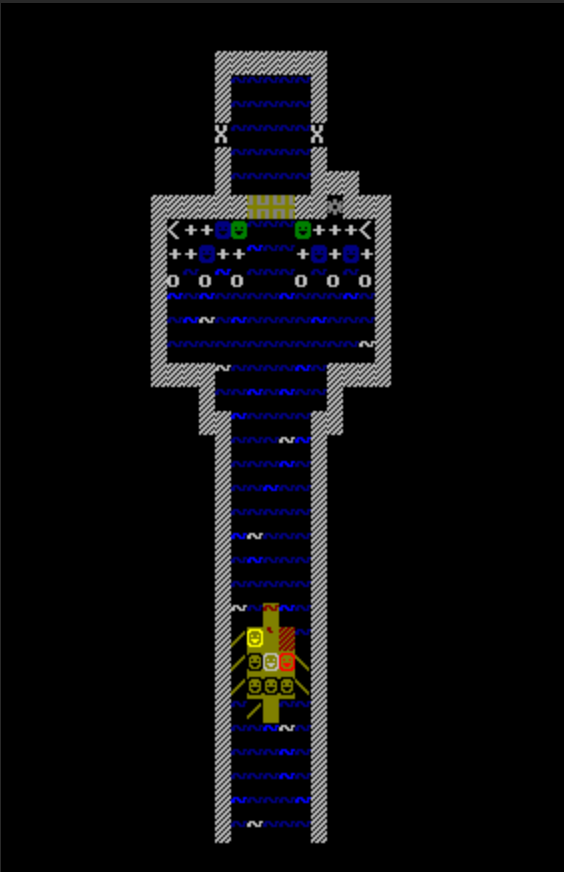
Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 09, 2009, 03:00:16 am**



Broose had been a woodsdwarf, then a soldier, then a bandit, as circumstances had dictated. Brought up in one of the lowland grottos, he had served to supply the ever-hungry desires of the Mountainhomes' forges up until the day his grotto was sacked by goblin raiders. As a survivor who knew his way around an axe, he was drafted into the force rallied against the goblin march and struggled against them for half a year before a truce was called. With no remaining home and little besides his axe to support him, Broose found employment amongst the humans as a woodcutter, who used lumber a great deal in their building. Eventually he came into contact with a rather amoral representative of one of the human Guilds, who was very willing to purchase goods from looted caravans. Teaming up with a handful of human mercenaries, Broose began waylaying caravans from his home nation to rival human cities, earning quite a name for himself in the process. He was eventually caught after a ten mile pursuit in which he seized a wagon, dumped the heavier cargo from it and whipped the horses into a gallop to evade the caravan's guards, at one point jumping a bridge and startling a flock of doves (this always happens).



Frey had met Broose as part of the work crew cleaning out the traps in the Mountainhome's main gully after the last failed goblin attack. During the break, Frey and Urgash managed to gain access to the solitary confinement pens and release the prisoners whilst Urgash's dogs distracted the guards. Broose had snatched up an axe and headed straight into the fray.



Broose nudged Frey in the ribs, growling softly; "Lock's up ahead. They're waiting for us, by the looks of it." Frey opened his eyes and peered out over the lip of the boat. The canal widened up ahead by the lock, where by the dim glowdish light he could make out guards by the lock's mechanisms. Frey glanced back at Fath, who was holding his crossbow tightly.

"How many bolts you got left in that thing?" he asked. Fath shook his head and held up two fingers. Frey nodded. "Make them count, then."

The dwarves prepared themselves as the boat approached the lock.

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As a warning guys, Boksi's plant mod does away with the standard DF plants in favour of a spread of variant fungi and mosses. The extended version ([http://webzoom.freewebs.com/iituem/dwarffort/matgloss\\_plant.txt](http://webzoom.freewebs.com/iituem/dwarffort/matgloss_plant.txt)) has a -lot- of surface plant variety to make up for it, but alas there are no more plump helmets. The equivalent at present are firecaps, small ruddy mushrooms that are absurdly spicy and the only underground crop that can be eaten raw (glowcaps make glowing alcohol and browncaps are processed to brown chow).

If this feels like too much of a departure, however, I can rebuild the world with the traditional plants as I have all the seed numbers.

Safe to say all male dwarves taken now. If there are only 3 males, I'll turn Frey into Freya. >.>

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Danneh** on **May 09, 2009, 03:06:46 am**

Quote from: kinseti on May 09, 2009, 02:55:57 am  
Really though, that's a lot of appraisin'. There's only so much appraising somedwarf can do.

Crazy dwarves do crazy things.

And yeah, I'll replace all instances of the word "Plump Helmet" in my post with "Firecap" and we'll go with those instead. I should have took a quick look at the mod before even making my post.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Broose** on **May 09, 2009, 03:09:50 am**

Alright, we need two more people? Hopefully we get them soon.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Enzo** on **May 09, 2009, 03:21:57 am**

Yeah, and one of them should probably have the foresight to bring a pick. *Probably*. That mod looks fun actually. Plump Helmets are getting a tad boring.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **[deleted]** on **May 09, 2009, 04:17:57 am**

Replacing plump helmets seeds with firecap seeds is absolutely fine.  
Quote from: kinseti on May 09, 2009, 03:21:57 am  
Yeah, and one of them should probably have the foresight to bring a pick. *Probably*. That mod looks fun actually. Plump Helmets are getting a tad boring.

I also grabbed those two copper nuggets, just in case. I also just realized that pig tails don't exist in this mod, so any 14-cost cloth is suitable.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **May 09, 2009, 04:46:44 am**

The descriptions of the prisoner's escape are so fascinating I feel I must join on. Anyway,

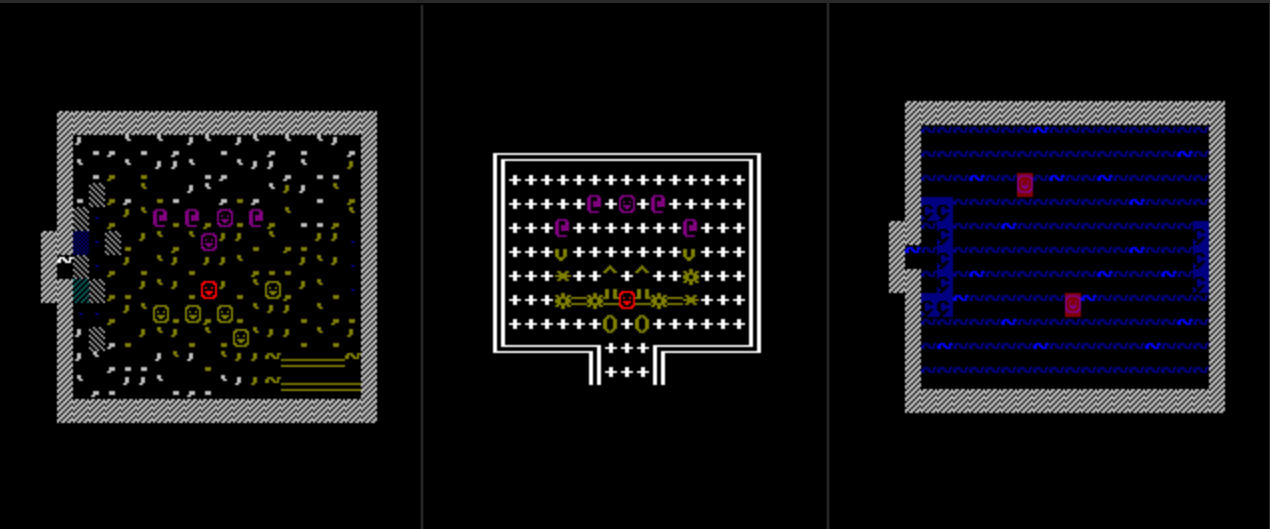
Name: Emerin  
Gender: Female  
Profession: Diamond Thief

- 3 Trader
- 2 Gem Cutter
- 2 Gem Setter
- 3 Miner

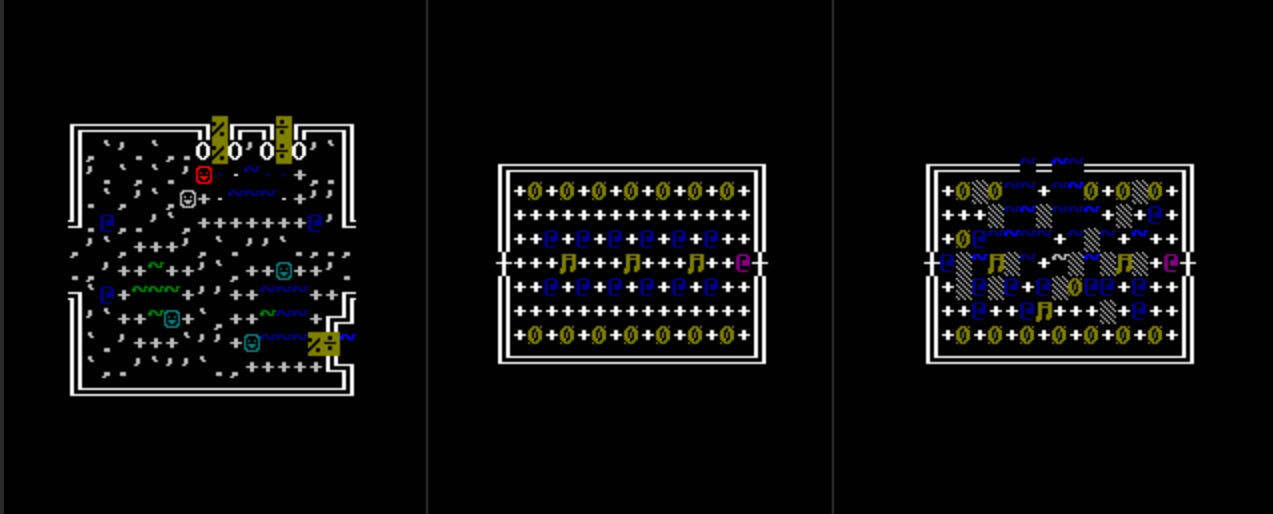
Crime Committed: Stealing jewels from Count Kogan's treasury and selling them to a rival house. Repeatedly.  
Sentence: Five years hard labor. Five additional for selling jewels from the mine on Count Kogan's land.

Equipment: Copper pick, and the few valuable gems she managed to sneak out in her escape. And maybe a bag to hold them. Bags of diamonds are always trouble.

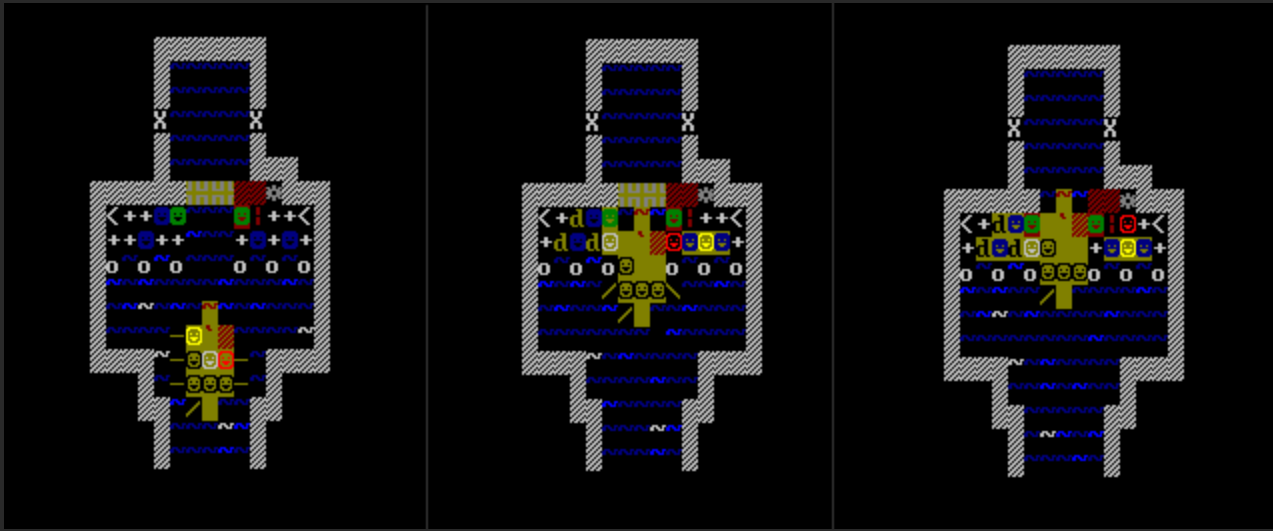
Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 09, 2009, 05:05:34 am**



Mad, they had called him. Mad! Truth be told the description was perfectly accurate, but Fath continued to insist they could have made their criticisms a little more delicately. Everyone had loved the irrigation system. The Baron had even granted him an extra supply of crumpets for the work. Nobody had wanted to even hear about the design for the brass thinking engine! Time and time again he had attempted to present his plans to the nobility, but all they seemed to want was brass armour stands, and much good he could do there! Eventually Fath had reached his limit and triggered the flooding mechanism during a routine inspection of the crop fields. That showed them. It showed them all.



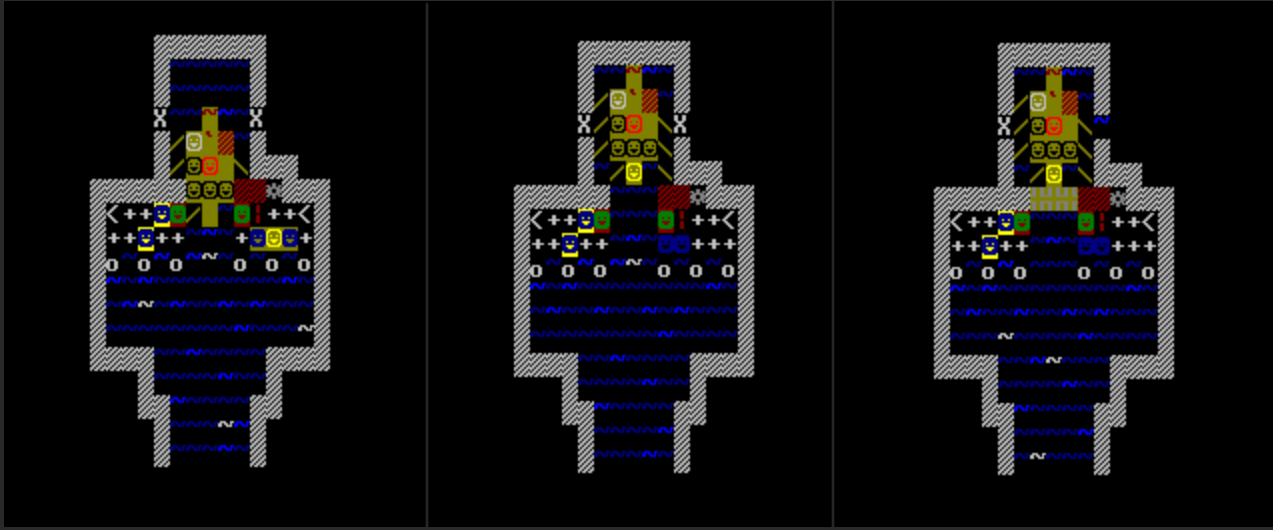
Unfortunately, it showed them all that he was too dangerous to be left in the outside world and subsequently Fath was carted away in chains to the Mountainhomes. He eventually met up with Frey while being assigned to the Mountainhomes' sewage works. Hearing about the rioting within the prison network, Fath was able to engineer a critical pressure buildup within the mountain sewage system, culminating in a violent black line rupture right in the middle of the guards' barracks. The delay allowed him and the others sufficient time to make their escape.



"Wait for it," growled Broose. "Get as close as we can without them seeing us, then open up on them."

The boat slunk forward in the shadows of the canal, edging closer and closer to the lock before one of the marksdwarves cried out. Fath rose, firing a bolt into his chest and knocking him into the water. As Urgash's dogs leapt from the below-deck hatch over to the soldiers on the left, followed swiftly by Frey and his pick, Broose launched himself onto the right-hand dock, matching the axedwarves there blow for blow. Fath pulled himself onto the dock and ducked and dodged past the combatants until he reached the mechanisms controlling the canal lock. Producing his tools he jury-rigged the lock in a matter of moments, leaping back onto the boat as the gates rose to allow it passage.

Driving his pick into the chest of the marksdwarf before him, Frey leapt back onto the boat as it drifted into the lock, followed suit by the hounds, leaving their targets dazed on the jetty tiles.



"Get a move on!" Fath yelled to Broose, who found himself struggling trying to hold off the strokes of the soldiers flanking him. "These floodgates are about to come right back down!"

Raising his axe, Broose deflected a harsh blow from one of the soldiers, turning and kicking the other in the chest to keep him away. In the corner of his eye, the boat had nearly passed completely into the lock. Swearing, Broose brought the hilt of his axe up into the soldier's jaw, then battered his fellow in the chest with the blade, leaping off the jetty and grabbing hold of the tail end of the boat. Wrenching himself up onto the deck, Broose spared a brief grin to the pair of shouting axedwarves as the floodgate slammed down between them.

Water began to pour into the lock, slowly pushing the boat upwards through the darkness.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Broose** on **May 09, 2009, 05:08:22 am**

Damn. My character is some kind of badass.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **May 09, 2009, 05:15:41 am**

If we still have one free, I'd like a mechanic called Loksvig.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **[deleted]** on **May 09, 2009, 05:16:44 am**

I love the storytelling so much.

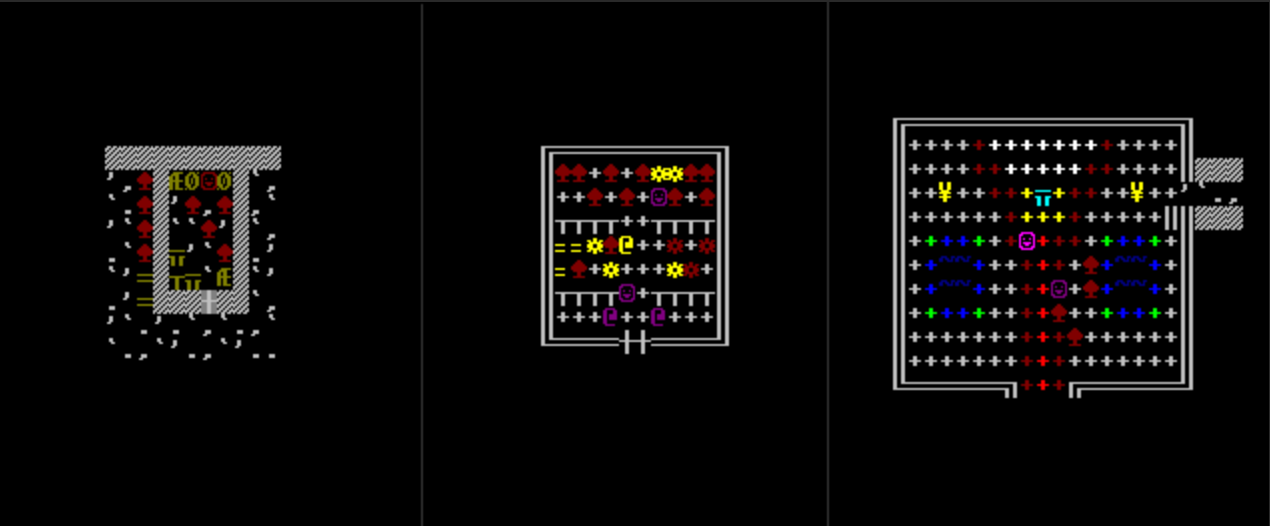


Sure, be a while before I get to his bit of the backstory (take me a while to do Danielle and Emerin yet), so feel free to pick out the various details such as equipment, personality and crime committed, Maggarg.

Any further submissions I will try to cater for at the first migrant wave.

Danielle had more or less entered life on the ill side of dwarven law. Born the daughter of the mine's main smith and its book-keeper, she had been weighed on the tronager's scales and subsequently fined for being overweight. At the age of five her mother had failed to fulfil a work order for bismuth bronze sarcophagi and, unwilling to lose their best smith, the local Baron had ordered five strokes to Danielle as punishment. As the young child recovered over the following months from her broken bones, the poor fortunes of her family could afford little more than the firecaps they grew on their own tiny plot within the grotto and so Danielle developed a taste for them which grew obsessive in equal measure to her skill with accountancy.

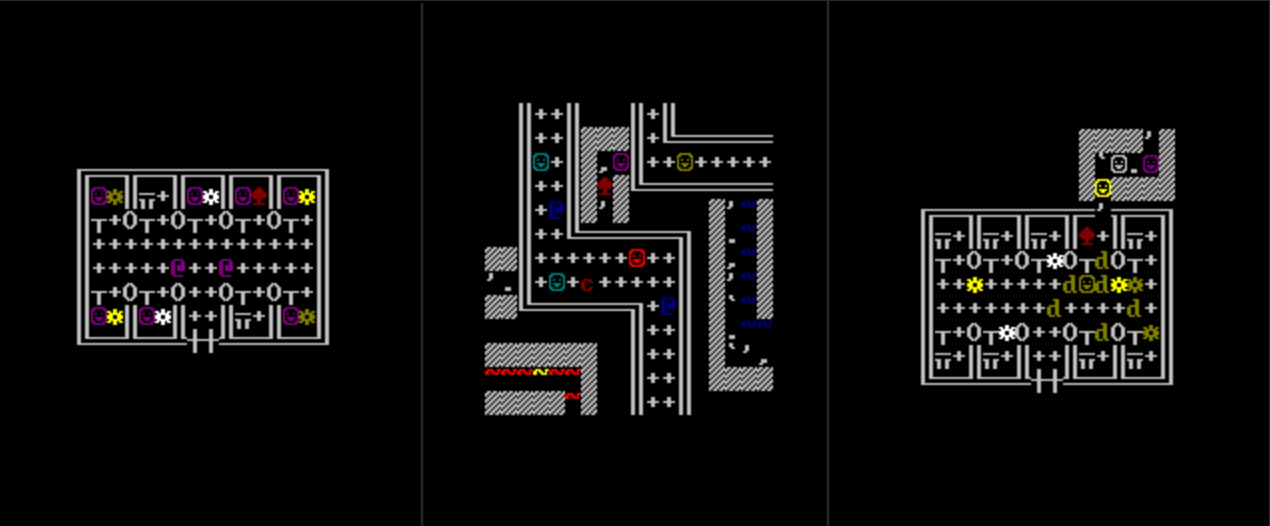
Danielle found work once she had reached the legal age of 12 replacing her father as colony book-keeper, a position in which she displayed prodigious talent but often was abused for access to the Baron, whom she inundated with requests, demands and proposals for a firecap-based economic model. In the hope of silencing this sort of behaviour, the Baron had ordered Danielle's leg broken. After a fashion this worked, as Danielle silently fulfilled her duties until her limb had healed, then vanished from the colony. She would reappear, years later, having bypassed all of the King's guard and the trapped defences of the Mountainhomes and surprising the monarch within his own bedchamber with a sack of firecaps and a plea to listen to her much-elaborated treatise on firecap economics. The king, to his credit, had calmly heard her out and dutifully promised to consider the proposal before the Royal Guard arrived to haul her away on treason charges.



Danielle had been in the Mountainhomes for a long time, drafted into the Treasury for her brilliant skill with counting despite a problematic inclination to calculate the worth of all objects based on the current rate of exchange for firecaps. She had served as a messenger throughout the citadel in that time as well as a custodian of records and so when the gaolbreak arrived in full swing, she was able to confront the escaping Frey, Broose and Urgash and demand they take her with them.

"Why?" Broose had demanded hotly. "We don't need extra baggage."

"How about a map?" she had asked. "I know the Mountainhomes like the back of my hand, and I've memorised all the old records. You want out? I know a way, but you have to take me with you." It had been reason enough. Danielle had grabbed one of her immediate stashes of firecaps and a stack of paper, then bolted with them through a secret passage behind her workstation to the promise of freedom.



The heavy groaning of machinery shook Frey awake. His inner ear was telling him that the boat had stopped rising, though in the pitch darkness of the lock it was impossible to see. He rubbed the tiredness from his eyes and brushed down his beard.

"How long were we rising for?" he managed.

"Hard to tell without a frame of reference," came a female voice that he recognised as Emerin's. "Maybe four hours?"

"Then we're nearly three hundred feet up," calculated Fath. "That would put us somewhere around the upper third of the mountain."

"Do the locks go that high?" asked Frey.

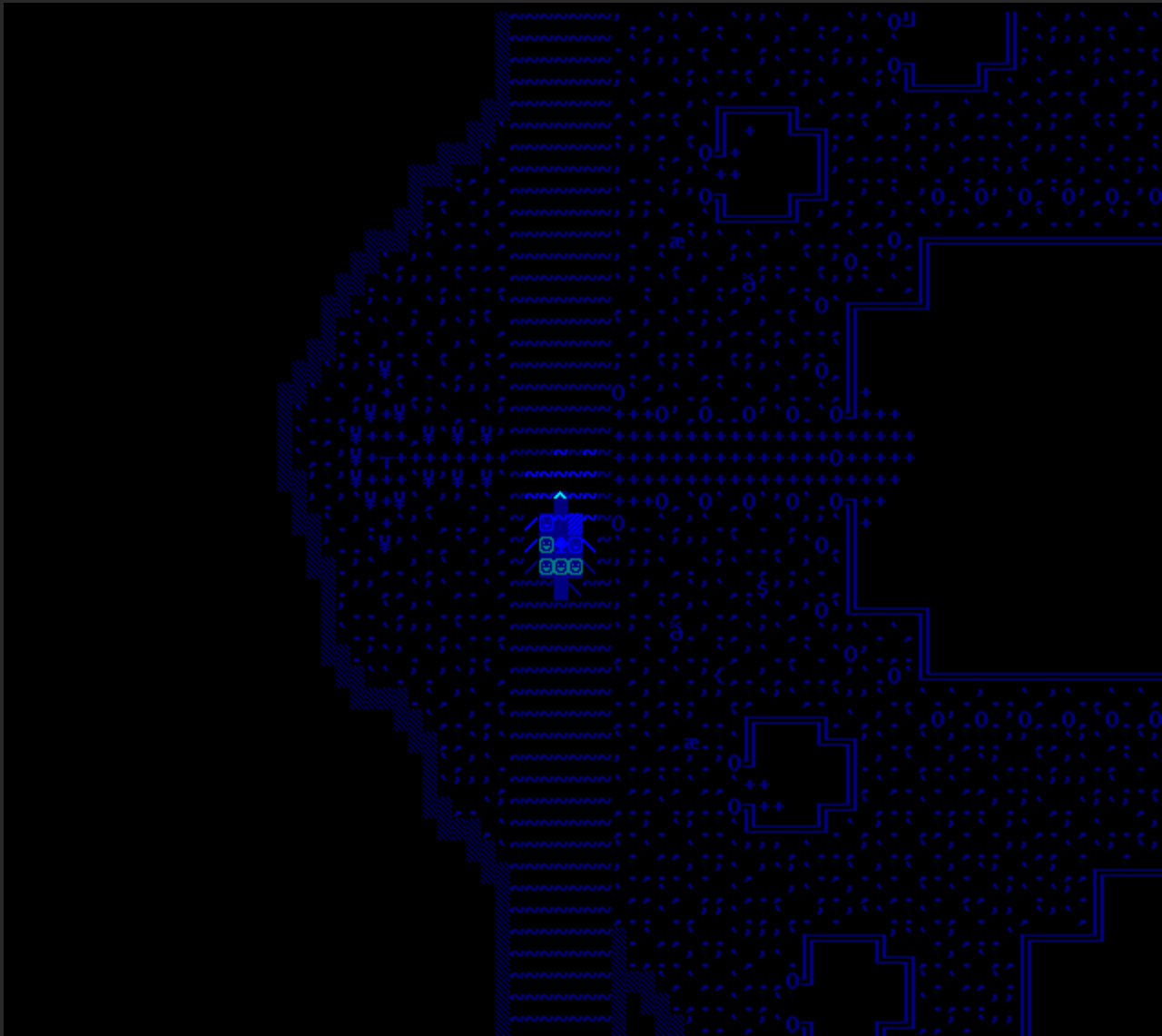
"They used to," murmured Danielle. "There were cassiterite deposits in the upper part of the mountain that used to form the foundation of the Mountainhome's industry, but when they were mined out a century ago the whole section was abandoned. The canal should still be intact and lead out to an old trade waterway."

The mechanical groaning ceased and the boat began to drift forward, rebounding gently off the sides of the canal. Frey fumbled in his clothing for a small glass phial and, finding it, uncorked it and shook it vigorously. After a few seconds of agitation the dull brown liquid within began to emit a soft blue-green luminescence, horrendously pale by human standards but just strong enough for a dwarf to navigate by in pitch darkness. Frey nudged Emerin lightly and pointed to the barely visible canal wall.

"You reckon that's chalk?" he asked. Emerin studied it for a moment and nodded. Producing a knife, she scraped a bit of the chalk from the passing wall into the phial, which Frey shook some more. The liquid within began to glow a deal more brightly, illuminating the canal ahead. With a spot of twine and the broken oar handle, Frey affixed the little glass phial of glow wine to the front of the boat where it

could highlight the scene beyond.

The boat had now left the higher walled section of the canal and drifted into a portion of the old city. Lit by the sallow twilight of the glowbottle, the once-revered edifices of the Mountainhomes seemed eerie and unwelcoming in their abandonment. The crew huddled together in the safety of the boat and began dividing up a ration of firecaps, mouthing prayers to Deler the Tin Oil, God of Mountains & Caverns, as they passed his silent shrine.



Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 09, 2009, 12:27:50 pm**

**Olonkulet Appendix Notes - Glow Wine**

Glowcaps are a type of mushroom-forming fungus known for their bioluminescent properties. Under ordinary light conditions, the glowcap mushroom appears to be a pale brown toadstool, but in darkness a glowcap emits a soft green luminescence. Once picked this luminescence fades quickly and the mushrooms themselves are quite bitter and unappealing for raw consumption. The trick of glowcaps lies in their preparation. Dwarves regularly ferment glowcaps in large open trays of rotting fungus, collecting the run-off from the fermentation process at the base of the tray (1). During the degradation process, the body of the mushrooms is broken down, releasing cell membranes into the mushy run-off from the process, as well as the calcium deposits within the fungus. The fermenting vats and the extracted liquor both glow brightly as a result of the renewed bioluminescent action of the disintegrated fungus.

On a molecular level, the cell membranes of the glowcap are specialised to contain lumens (2) into which calcium can diffuse (3). As calcium diffuses into the lumen, a reaction is powered that generates bioluminescence in the form of pale blue-green light. This will continue until the system has reached equilibrium (4), whereupon no more light will be emitted. Dwarves can restart the process by shaking a bottle of glow wine or mixing about some of the glow mash (5), breaking the lumens and releasing fresh calcium. This will only work a certain number of times before the capacity of the glow wine/mash to produce light is lost. Another way is to add raw calcium (in the form of chalk or another calcium compound) to the mixture.

Glow caps are a staple of the dwarven diet and dwarven agriculture. Highly limited as the variety of viable underground crops are, glow caps provide much-needed booze, light and food (as the liquor can be dried and cooked as a sort of powder) in an environment drastically short on all three.

- 1) A solid substrate fermentation process, similar to the production of sake.
- 2) Small enclosed spaces within the cell.
- 3) Diffusion is where molecules travel from a high concentration to a low concentration.
- 4) i.e. There are equal concentrations of Calcium ions on either side of the lumen membrane.
- 5) Leftover solid mush from the fermentation that did not go into the glow wine, but still glows. This was the mash present in the glowbowls in the very first scene.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **May 09, 2009, 12:31:53 pm**

i will take a fugitive

nickname:ascubis(real name is unknown)  
reason: "accidently" caused a cave in on a pack of wardogs and guards  
carries:a iron pick, some rum, some plump helmets.  
likes/dislikes: likes dogs,plump helmet spawn, rum, and the outdoors.  
dislikes, GCS' and people who get on his nerves. :D

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Danneh** on **May 09, 2009, 01:15:30 pm**

Loving the storytelling, and the images add to it well.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **May 09, 2009, 01:42:00 pm**

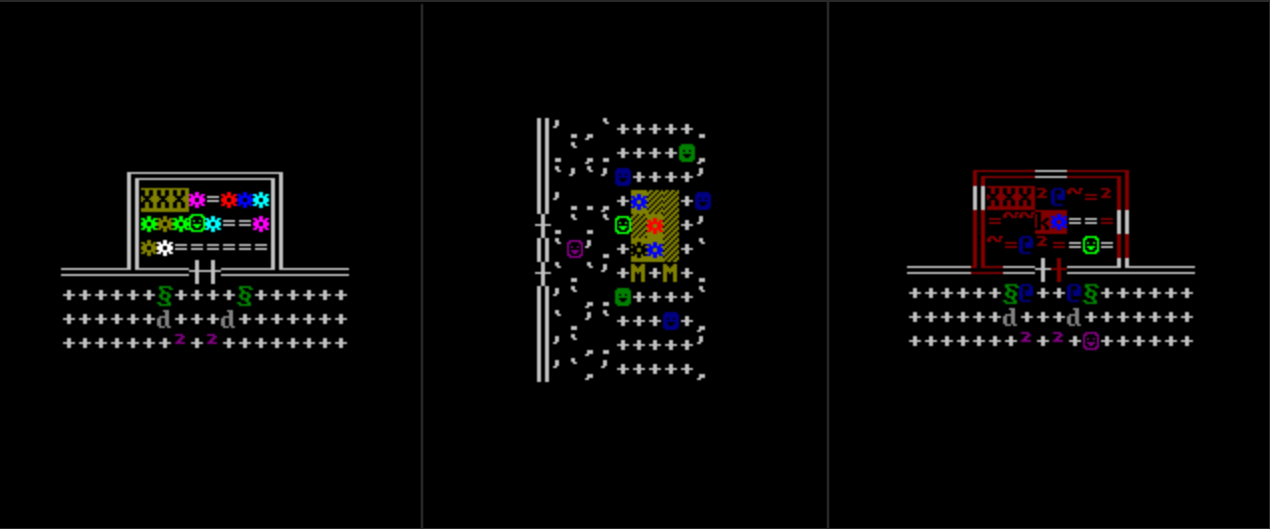
i really like the story. if only the other community forts were likes this :D



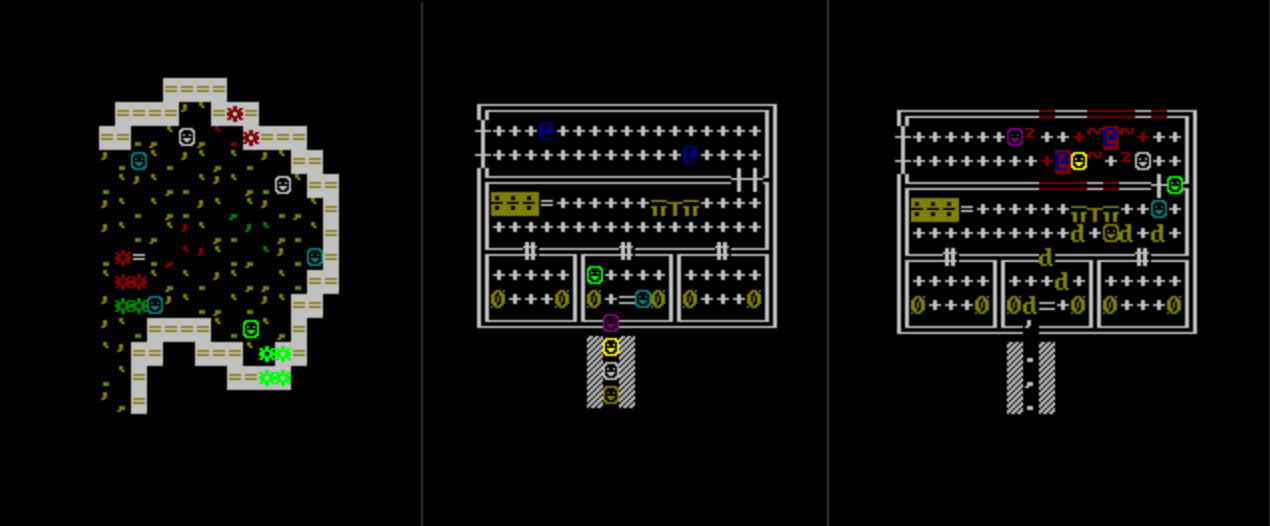
Is this within Olonkulet, or are they the dwarves that began Olonkulet, far back in history.  
I love the way you're writing this, far better than I could.

This thread is getting me hoping to have boats in the next few versions.

*Emerin had been a 'treasure hunter' for Baron Likot for a year after learning that not only did she have an eye for gemstones but a fine spot of skill with negotiations. Throughout the year, the Baron's rival Count Kogan repeatedly found himself being losing gemstones to the 'secure' vault, protected by a pair of guard dogs who were rather stereotypically vulnerable to the old 'piece of hoary marmot meat trick. Count Kogan did not suffer a net loss of jewels however, as a trader would usually turn up shortly beforehand or afterwards to sell him a completely different set of jewels at an affordable price. At the same time, Baron Likot strangely never found himself with more jewels than he started with and never managed to learn not to keep letting Emerin 'put these gemstones in the vault for you'. Emerin was eventually caught more or less by accident, as she timed her last robbery such that it coincided with the kobold Sluicyjuices' attempt to make off with Kogan's blue diamond-encrusted platinum back scratcher and the entire vault locked itself down until the guards arrived to take her to the gaols and Sluicyjuices' various parts to the corpse pile.*



*Emerin had, like Urgash and Frey, been put to work primarily in the mines on the sandstone level. She had successfully smuggled a number of gemstones out of the quarries over the two years of her sentence, cutting them and using them to bribe the guards for various favours. By the time the gaolbreak happened, she had been moved into a spacious cell with only one other cellmate, a cheesemaker named Urist who had defrauded the Crown out of twenty years' taxes. So comfortably settled had she become, she had actually bribed an inmate to forge a copy of her own cell key. It was by chance recognition of Urgash and Frey that she and Urist joined the party of escapees when Dannielle's escape tunnel opened up right into her own cell! Quickly grabbing a bag of gemstones stashed behind a stone, Emerin unlocked the cell door and escaped with the others.*



*Light filtered in from the end of the tunnel, obscuring the dim twilight of the glowbottle in richer colours. The distant sound of rushing water could be heard and the canal flowed more readily towards the tunnel's mouth. A mild dispute had broken out amongst the gathered dwarves over the issue of food.*

"Not one of us thought to bring fruit or vegetables?" frowned Emerin.

"We were in a bit of a hurry," snapped Broose. "Be glad we have food at all."

"We have firecaps!" piped Danielle cheerfully. "What else could we need?" That comment garnered her a number of looks from the rest of the party, vocalised best in Frey's retort;

"Personally, I like food that doesn't make it hurt to visit the outhouse afterwards. They call them firecaps for a reason."

"Shame we didn't bring any redbulbs," sighed Fath. "Flour would be a godsend. Crumpets or, by Nish's beard, scones would be ideal. I would happily kill for some tea and scones."

"I grabbed what I could from the kitchens," said Urgash. "It's a moot point anyhow, we're coming up to the canal mouth."

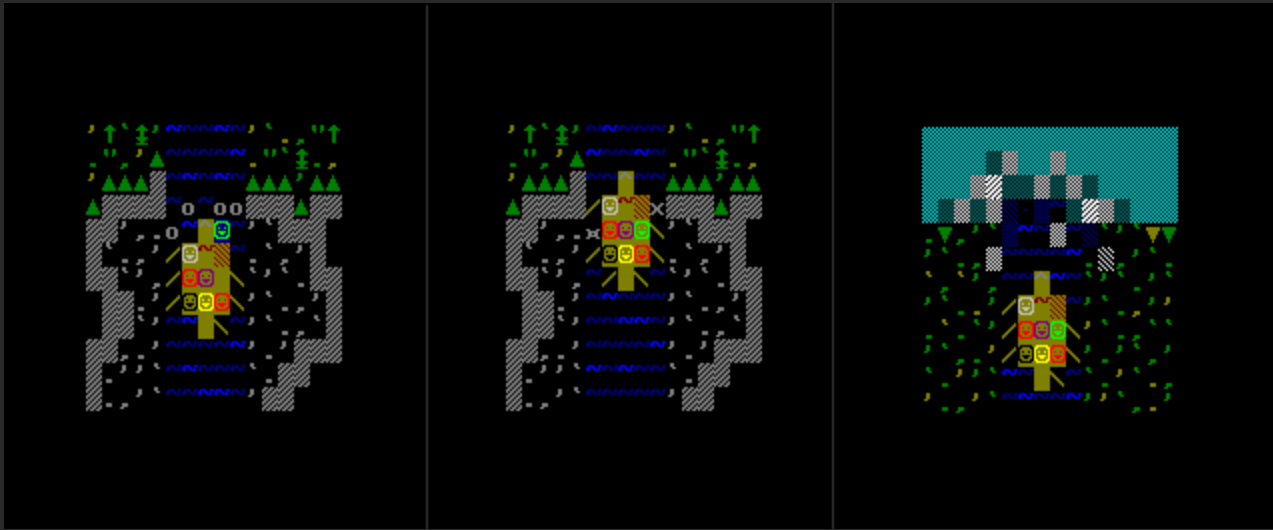
The boat drifted with the current up to the mouth of the canal where it broadened out and joined a natural stream on the surface. A series of stalagmites that had grown around the mouth of the canal blocked their progress, but Emerin and Frey waded into the water and broke them with their picks before clambering back onto the passing boat. Up ahead, the waterfall loomed dangerously.

"Please tell me you're kidding me," demanded Broose. Danielle shook her head.

"There are about six of them, according to the maps," she explained. "The boat should be able to take it, but we'll need to hang on tight. Once we get past the falls we can just ride out the river until we reach somewhere safe to disembark."

"Great," muttered Broose as the edge of the 'fall approached. He gripped the edge of the boat tight and yelled back to the others.

"Hold onto your beards! We're going dooooooowwwnnnn...."



Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 09, 2009, 05:43:36 pm**

We haven't even reached Olonkulet yet. This story is chronicling the effort to escape the Mountainhomes by the seven dwarves who will end up founding Olonkulet in a desperate effort to survive. Once we actually get there, I'll disclose the map of the location (4x4, for my poor CPU). Maggarg, feel free to add in any specifics for skills or the crime your dwarf was imprisoned for and I'll try and write it into the last backstory. Scuba, your dwarf will have to wait for an immigration wave.

I'm quite enjoying the ASCII fiction style, however, so there may be more short narrative-based vignettes taking place after the fortress proper has started to give it more flavour and story.

Also, boats will be -yeeears- before they arrive, but I envisioned this midnight canal chase when I was searching for a first line. Thus, there are midnight canals. Huzzah!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Enzo** on **May 09, 2009, 05:45:22 pm**

Quote from: Iituem on May 08, 2009, 08:57:06 pm  
Please choose a name, skill ranks (up to 10 available for everyone) and 200\* worth of equipment, as well as listing the crime for which you were imprisoned in the Mountainhomes. If you don't want to try and work out equipment values, just say what you'd like and I'll try and fit it in.

So...since two people requested the last dwarf but neither did this...Well, it's your call Iituem.  
EDIT : Oh, I guess you addressed that in your last post. My bad.

Quote from: [deleted] on May 09, 2009, 05:16:44 am  
I love the storytelling so much.  
Quote from: Danneh on May 09, 2009, 01:15:30 pm  
Loving the storytelling, and the images add to it well.  
Quote from: scuba on May 09, 2009, 01:42:00 pm  
i really like the story. if only the other community forts were likes this :D

What they said. Pretty epic considering the escape is just the *backstory*.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **May 09, 2009, 05:55:58 pm**

lol :P not pretty epic epically epic :D :P

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Broose** on **May 09, 2009, 06:36:33 pm**

Quote from: Iituem on May 09, 2009, 05:43:36 pm  
Also, boats will be -yeeears- before they arrive, but I envisioned this midnight canal chase when I was searching for a first line. Thus, there are midnight canals. Huzzah!

The thing that made it so appealing was the ascii art you made. I really like this fort and we have not even embarked yet.

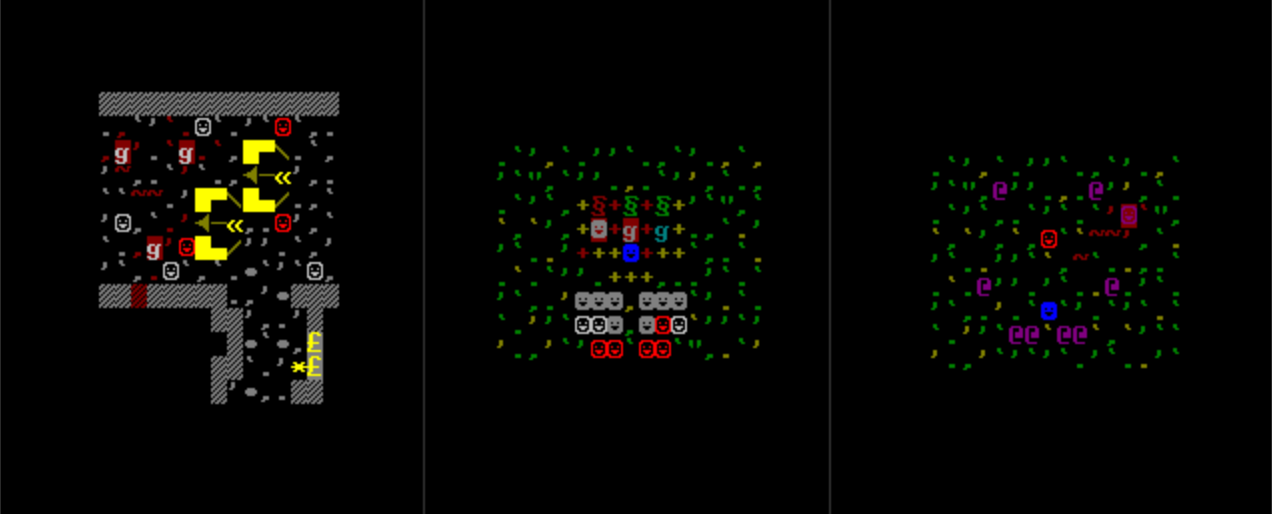
Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Obsidian** on **May 09, 2009, 08:07:08 pm**

Oh my god.  
This is epic.

Seriously, amazing storytelling. I love the ascii art, and how you're doing a backstory for each of the starting 7.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 10, 2009, 01:59:42 pm**

Loksvig had, like Broose, served in the last goblin war but as a military engineer. He and Frey first met in the engineering corps as part of an attack on goblin tunnel networks. Frey's team of miners delved tunnels into the goblin supply lines, whilst Loksvig's engineers manoeuvred mobile ballistae into the tunnel network as part of concerted attacks on goblin fortresses and outposts. The pair had served under a dwarf by the name of Stonebreaker, whose cruelty and disregard for the safety of his dwarves became almost as legendary as the fear he inspired in his enemies. After the war, Frey left the military to pursue a mining career but Loksvig remained, as the army was always in need of good mechanics and engineers. To his misfortune he became trapped in a power struggle between Stonebreaker and another dwarf and sided against his commander out of disgust at his nature. Stonebreaker won the struggle and as retribution pinned the murder of his competitor upon Loksvig. He might have then been executed by hammer, but the Mountainhomes were in as much need of good engineers as the army and so his sentence was adjusted to indefinite imprisonment instead.



When Frey, Urgash, Broose, Emerin, Urist and Danielle finally reached the sealed gate leading to the canals, the Mountainhomes were in chaos. Scores of prisoners had been released during the riots and the docks were relatively unguarded with the military disposed to putting down the threat. A pair of dwarves were attempting to rig the mechanisms to open, but with little luck.

"Stot!" swore one of them. "This isn't working, Fath, the locks are too complex."

"Fath? Loksvig?" called Frey. "What's behind that door?"

"The docks," Danielle cut in, "and our way out. I can guide us through the canal system."

"Good luck!" shouted Fath. "We cannae get the doors open, Frey! I don' have the tools!"

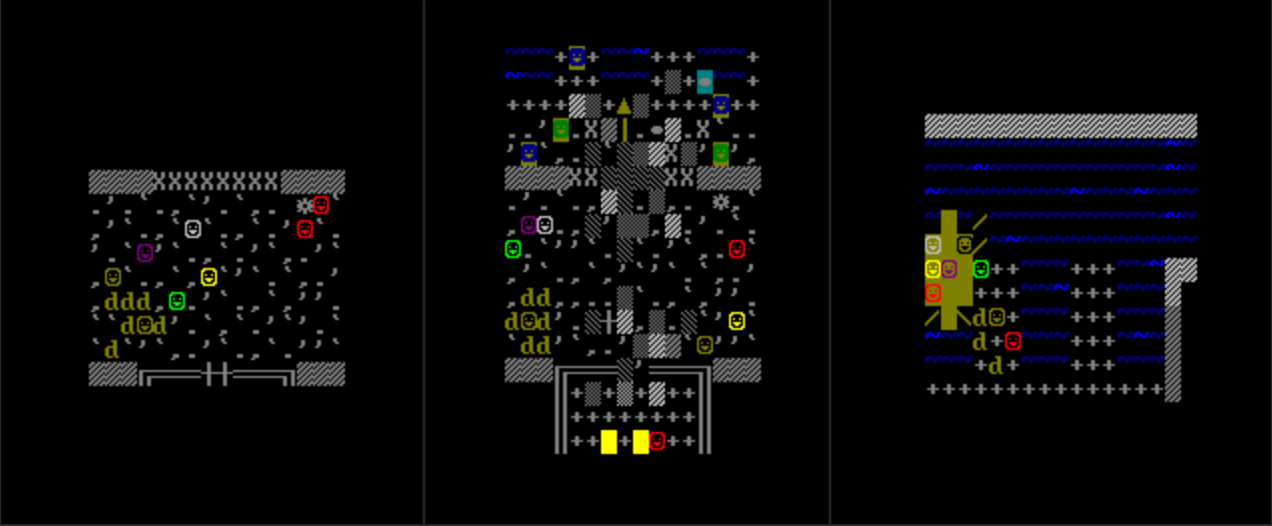
"Hold on," said Loksvig, glancing at the dockyard defences (goblins had in the past attempted ill-considered naval assaults on the Mountainhomes, after all). "I've got an idea." Before the others could object, he bolted towards the nearby armoury.

"Hey!" cried Fath. "I need two pairs of hands here! Bah, bloody engineers. Look, can you and the wee lass just hold-"

"Everyone clear away from the dock gate!" boomed a voice from the armoury. Frey, realising what was coming, physically dived out of the way. The others, able to take a hint, did the same as the armoury doors blasted apart in a hail of splinters and a ballista arrow tore through the air, narrowly missed shaving Broose's beard and shattered the dockyard gate. The dwarves picked themselves up, coughing dust as Loksvig ran back out from the armoury.

"Let's get a move on," he said. "If that doesn't attract the guards, I have no idea what will."

Grabbing their possessions, the dwarves hustled through into the docks beyond, where the troop of guards waiting for them had been knocked unconscious by the blast. Spying a boat tethered to the docks with a pair of beasts of burden stood idly on deck, the dwarves crossed onto the boat, forcing the animals below-decks and grabbing oars. With a swing of his axe, Broose cut the mooring rope and the dwarves began their escape.



By the time Frey awoke, the current had already begun to slow. By some miracle, all seven dwarves had managed to stay in the boat through the waterfalls and all had survived, but the current had carried them far and frost had begun to form on their beards. Danielle had snuggled up to Broose for warmth and most of the dwarves were huddled around themselves, nibbling on firecaps to try and take the edge off the cold. Fath peered over the edge of the boat; chunks of ice floated merrily on the water's surface, bobbing against the wood. The banks of the river stretched onwards across a lengthy desert plain, covered in shifting red sands. To one side, the sands dropped downward as the crest of a hill.

"Where are we?" he asked.

"I can't be certain," offered Loksvig, "but that range up ahead looks like the Horn of Grips, so that would put us in the Dipped Moist Desert."

"That's nearly a hundred miles away!" exclaimed Fath.

"River travelled pretty fast at the bottom. You were asleep for this bit, but the river actually changed course for about ten minutes. There must've been a flash flood downstream. Didn't last long, but we got flushed off the main course and into a tributary. Got sent downstream, then missed another fork and started down this way. Now it's a dead end."

"Dead end?" asked Emerin. "How can a river be a dead end?" In response, the boat thudded gently to a halt. The dwarves peered over the edge and saw where the river's surface had fully frozen over with ice.

"So now what?" she asked.

"We could try and drag it," suggested Urgash. "The altitude's pretty high here, by the thickness of the air, so if we can get it downhill a bit we might get to a thawed bit."

The dwarves dragged the boat for nearly twenty minutes before Broose dropped his end in exasperation.

"That's it!" he shouted. "I am not going on with this fool's errand any longer!" Fath started to complain, but was cut off. "Look around you! This is a mountain! The desert drops off on one edge but it's far too steep to drag the boat without breaking it any further and the ice just keeps going as far as we can see upstream. We could drag this thing for three days and still not see any running water."

"What do we do then?" demanded Fath.

"Strike the earth," pronounced Frey. The others looked stunned, so he went on. "Make some shelters, at any rate. We don't know what kind of wildlife we'll get out here, and I don't intend to find out at its jaws. Look, we've got some beasts of burden and a boat. We can

try and grow some supplies from the leftovers from what we brought, build some decent wagons and make a proper effort at an escape. That's going to take time. So let's dig in and get it sorted."

"No, not dig in," murmured Danielle. "Build up." If the dwarves had been stunned at Frey's suggestion, they were outright shocked at Danielle's.

"Look at the Mountainhomes," she insisted. "The old town we went through, the way it was abandoned like that when the veins dried up. The heavy swathes cut through the mountains with no regard for either aesthetic or nature. Don't look at me like that!" she snapped at Broose. "I know what you're thinking. This all sounds Elvish. Well, the Elves are nutters and we all know it, especially over things that grow back with time. Mountains don't grow back. What sort of future are we going to leave for our children?"

"So building up is the solution?" said Emerin.

"Not hollowing out the mountain is the solution," explained Danielle. "At least no more than is necessary. I visited a place once, Clockworks, that managed to build a city - a true, dwarven city - without gutting the mountain like a fish. Maybe we're only here for a season. Maybe we could get stuck here for more. Either way, let's try and do it right. What do you say?" There was a rumble from the group of dwarves. Urgash spoke up.

"I say we get started."

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The Crash Site (<http://www.mkv25.net/dfma/poi-14690>)

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **[deleted]** on **May 10, 2009, 02:17:45 pm**

Awesome. How will turns be working? One year in game time? Who will be starting off first?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **May 10, 2009, 03:08:35 pm**

This is a community game, not succession, so no turns. We'll have to sit back and watch as Iituem leads our characters to greatness and glory, and perhaps tell an interesting story along the way.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 10, 2009, 05:08:11 pm**

Danielle's Inventory, 1st Granite 351

*Took stock of what we have, based on what we were able to grab from the Mountainhomes before the escape. We've reached an agreement to pool everything for the sake of survival.*

Clothes on our backs - Unknown Value in Firecaps (Fc)  
*(Nobody seems willing to surrender these.)*  
Steel Battleaxe - 150Fc  
*Broose's, and he is hanging onto it.*  
Glowing Wine [47 pints] - 23.5Fc  
*Fath and Urgash both managed to smuggle some out during the escape.*  
63oz firecap spawn - 31.5Fc  
40 firecaps - 40Fc  
*So many firecaps!*  
10oz glowcap spawn - 5Fc  
*From Frey's lantern, just enough live spawn left in it to seed a few patches.*  
Dogskin leather [8 yards] - 20Fc  
Deer meat [10lbs] - 10Fc  
Bronze crossbow - 25Fc  
1 steel bolt - 5Fc  
*Fath's, and a lucky shot he got in on that guard!*  
Pipemoss Cloth [3 yards] - 10.5Fc  
5 turquoises, 5 moonstones, 5 fire agates, 5 bloodstones - 100Fc  
1 pipemoss bag - 5Fc  
Brown Chow [5 tins] - 2.5Fc  
5oz Browncap Spawn - 2.5Fc  
*There was a small stash of rations in the boat. I should be able to scrape some spawn out of the leftovers.*  
2 stones of Tetrahedrite - 9Fc  
*Go Fath for getting this!*  
Steel Buckler - 150Fc  
*Frey managed to wrestle this off a guard.*

*If we take apart the boat (and there's a bit of disagreement amongst the boys on this), we can salvage about 50 lengths of wood, a length of rope and maybe two bars' worth of copper.*

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Indeed, this is a community fortress. Think Nist Akath over Boatmurdered. I enjoy succession games, but they have the disadvantage of slowness and a chance of breaking apart without a committed group playing (as in Abbeyverse or the Endless Halls).

I will endeavour to try and get a basic update or vignette done every 2 days or sooner, folks. If not a lot is happening within the fortress to report about, I will typically do a vignette in its place.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **[deleted]** on **May 10, 2009, 05:26:19 pm**

Quote from: Jim Groovester on May 10, 2009, 03:08:35 pm

This is a community game, not succession, so no turns. We'll have to sit back and watch as Iituem leads our characters to greatness and glory, and perhaps tell an interesting story along the way.

Oh, understood. Yeah, I guess I had the wrong idea coming into this, but it's still highly interesting.

Now I know the difference between a community game and a succession game. ;)

Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **May 10, 2009, 05:57:17 pm**

oh man, this sounds like it should be awesome! ;D



I noticed a curious oddity when looking through the Civilisation screen for the name of the King. It turns out the party actually embarked from The Searing Crypts, not The Long Bolt as intended. Whilst I could certainly re-embark with no difficulties, I think you'll find the 'quirk' to be rather interesting once certain events come into play.

Update in a couple of hours, probably.

Worship List for The Searing Crypts:

- Onol the Tin Silver - God of Metals
- Nish the East Wanderer of Wheels - Goddess of Wealth and Trade
- Gigin - Goddess of Fortresses, Minerals and War
- Zas Coppercoloured the Blueness of Dye - God of Jewels
- Deler the Tin Oil - God of Mountains and Caverns
- Nakas - Goddess of Revelry

CHAPTER ONE: SURVIVAL

*It occurred to Frey soon after the boat had crashed that he might well be doomed to spend the remainder of his life in the company of a murderer, a bandit, a mad engineer, a mushroom-obsessed savant, a jewel thief and a siege engineer probably responsible for the deaths of hundreds. On the bright side, there was a strong prospect that the remainder would not be very long.*

When Danielle and Broose returned to the boat that evening, it had been tipped on its side and Fath was already busy taking it apart for parts. A brief argument ensued, with Broose eventually conceding that it could be rebuilt in time. Danielle busied herself drawing with a piece of chalk on the ground (itself chalk) and eventually ended up with a map. The other dwarves gathered around as she explained.

"So the plain drops straight down about 220ft to the west. There's desert at the bottom and little else."

"No trees, though," added Broose, "so my axe is going to be little help. What wood we've got is in that ship hull, so let's not waste it."

"Plants are an issue too," continued Danielle, "so we're going to be living off our rations until we can grow some fresh firecaps. Speaking of which, the mesa to the west has sand up the far surface, so we can dig some beds into that for growing mushrooms on. It's a bit exposed and a bit of a walk from where we are right now, but it's the closest spot."

"We should set up a quarry to the southwest once that's done," ventured Loksvig. "Start 'building up', as Danielle seems so keen on, near the boat. Something communal, with a beerhall and bunks. Let's get a roof over our heads before we worry about individual arrangements."

*Emerin's Log - 12th Granite, 351*

Things have strangely fallen to me to get things in order. Frey and I have cleared out sections of the mesa's upper spire now for Danielle's farmwork, and Fash has drawn up plans for a basic shelter. Presently we've been using the boat as cover, so anything will be a step up. Danielle has conceded the necessity of basement storage, provided we do not delve deeper than ten feet below the surface, so we'll have a food store directly underneath the beerhall as well. Good news there, at least.

*13th Granite, 351*

Looks like we're sat right on top of a tetrahedrite vein! Along with the evidence of magnetite everywhere, if we're stuck here for a while we might be able to forge some decent tools for building the wagons. At present, we must content ourselves with digging out this storage space and preparing for more building work.

*24th Granite, 351*

The stream thawed today. Looks to be a seasonal thing. We don't have a boat now, of course, but it will be useful to know for the future. Broose slaughtered a number of goats and camels in the first week, as our site appears to be near a number of migratory trails. Urgash has had a deal of fun trying to keep up with the backlog of corpses and slaughtering them. We are likely to find ourselves with plenty of meat in the near future.

*1st Slate, 351*

"It's nae much," said Fath, "but it's hame."

"It's a shack," stated Broose flatly.

"And it's hame," repeated Fath. "If yon dinnae like it, yon can build yon own damn hoose."

The building was not at all much and indeed something of a shack. A squat stone building subdivided into two rooms, the house just about managed to cram in seven beds, a handful of tables and some doors. It was just about big enough for a stonemason in-pocket to live comfortably with a spouse in back in the Mountainhomes. Here, it promised cramped conditions and an emotional hothouse.

"There's more space in the cellar," muttered Broose.

"Well, yon can always make yonself comfy doon there wi' the barrels o' goat fat, nae?"

"Speaking of goat fat," Frey cut in, "how are we doing with the food situation?"

"We've food enough for seasons yet," explained Danielle. "Our main issue is going to be drink. I've seeded the glowcaps, but even with the current crop we may not have enough to pull through. A dwarf drinks 18 fifths of a barrel of liquor every year. We've got maybe thirty, thirty-five left, barely enough for two of us. If we get a full crop of glowcaps this season, we can prop that up by another twenty perhaps, plus a bit more. We've maybe enough to last til autumn on that basis."

"What then?" asked Emerin, fearing the answer.

"Sobriety." A chorus of wails filled the crowd before Loksvig spoke up.

"Wait," he said, "this might not be too bad. There's a trade caravan that passes through here on its way to the salt mines at Abbeyverse. If we risk intercepting it-"

"And get caught?" exclaimed Broose. "Are you mad?"

"They'll have booze, damn it!" shouted Loksvig. "I think we can all agree that's more important!" A vague murmur of assent rose from the alcoholic crowd. "There's plenty of stone in the area, and we have leather and bone from Broose's hunts. Urgash, you've got experience with bloodcrafts, right? If we can get enough goods together for trade, we can buy the booze we need and maybe tools to build the wagons with. Can we manage that?" There was another rumble of assent.

"Then that's what we're going to do," decided Emerin. "We need to survive, first and foremost. We need booze."

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **May 10, 2009, 10:04:13 pm**

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Could you post the personality pages of us embarking seven? I'm interested in whether Emerin worships that god of jewels, and maybe whether or not she likes valuable gems.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 10, 2009, 11:57:38 pm**

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*Emerin's Log - 5th Felsite, 351*

Danielle estimates nearly a thousand firecaps' worth of goods have been produced from Urgash's workshop. I think that comes to about two hundred gold coins. Should be plenty enough for trade, but Urgash has asked for another building to be constructed for a proper set of workshops. If we combine the four bloodwork professions into one building, it should all fit quite neatly.

**Vignette - Dusk & Solitude**  
*10th Felsite, 351*

Emerin glanced over her shoulder at the sound of scrabbling, then smiled as Loksvig clambered onto the roof. She returned to her watch over the mountains to the south, lit by the waning light of dusk and the dim stone bowl of glowmash before her. Loksvig sat down beside her with a bundle of twigs under his arm.

"Noticed you spend your evenings up here," he explained, dropping the twigs onto the ground. "Thought you might like something a little brighter than that glowbowl."

"As if I could ever grow tired of that cyan aura!" she laughed musically, then smiled again and bowed her head in thanks. "Where did you get these?"

"The desert. Ran them by Dani, they're no good for eating or even basketweaving, and there's nothing out there thick enough to use as wood, but they ought to burn well enough. Shall I try and get a fire started?" Emerin nodded and so he began rifling through the pockets of his violet threadmoss robe. It had been a rich affair once, suitable for nobility, but time and the harsh environment of prison had rendered it covered in rough stitching and patchwork. Emerin wondered about that for a moment, then looked again to the mountains.

"I come for the view," she sighed softly, "and to be alone to view it. Not that you're not welcome," she added quickly with a grin. Loksvig chuckled at that and produced his flint sparker, then set about starting the tinder. "It *is* cramped in the house, though," Emerin continued, "and I like to have somewhere to be alone at. Up here, it's just me and the mountains."

There was a little cheer from Loksvig as he managed to get the twigs to catch fire, prompting a giggle from Emerin.

"I used to do something like it, during the war," said Loksvig as he piled more twigs onto the fire, fanning it. "When we were down in the tunnels, there was no such thing as quiet. The miners were always chipping away at the stone - we worked in shifts so the tunnelling would never stop - and as engineers we were always dealing with either the siege engines or the brass. One would never work, and the other would never let us free for an hour to repair them.

"Every now and again, though, we'd tap into these inclusions in the rock full of gemstones. Big geodes, really. Even being dwarves, mining takes time, so for the week or so before we moved out of range we'd all visit them on our breaks. We'd just sit there in silence, pretending nobody else was in the chamber. The beauty of it, of those deep gemstone chambers, I would not trade for the most precious of adamantine sculptures."

Loksvig's eyes drifted to the far horizon, to the unseen hollows of those mountains and to memory.

"Eventually we'd have to move on," he continued. "The tunnels had to be dug, the machines had to be moved. There was a war on. When we left those places behind, though, we'd break off a small piece of the scenery; a gemstone fragment to keep with us. After that, whenever things were too hot and heavy, whenever we needed that solitude again, we could simply hold it and remember."

He reached into a pocket and drew forth a tattered old pipemoss rag, unrolling it in his palm. Twelve gemstone shards glimmered in the evening glow.

The pair sat in silence for a few minutes as the Sun descended upon the western horizon, blanketing the dusty chalk plains and the endless stretches of red sand in vibrant shades of gold, pink and purple. Emerin spoke first.

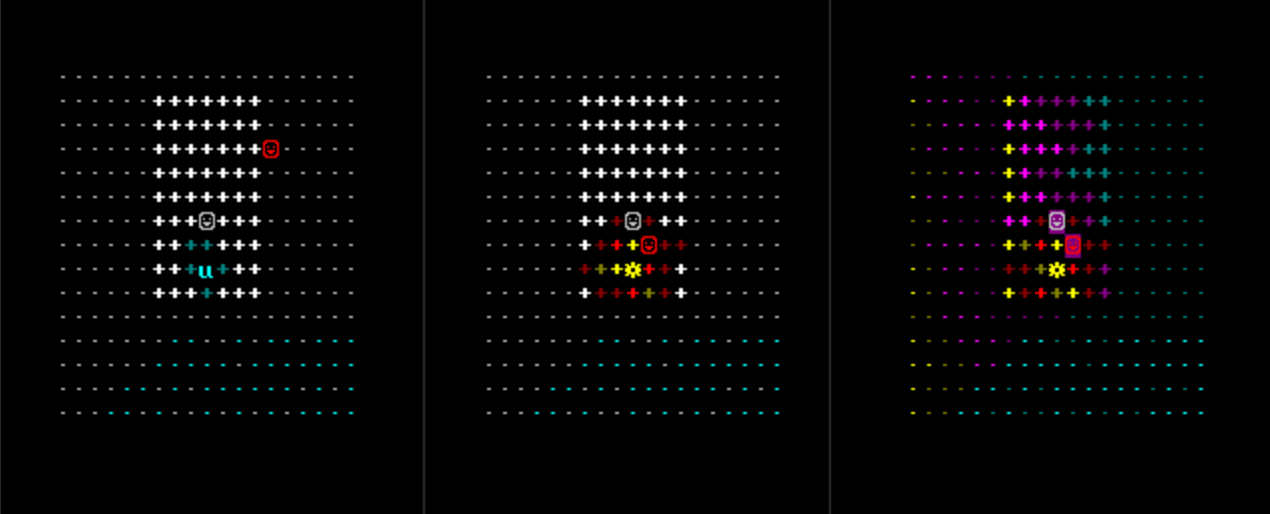
"Loksvig," she began, "I've been meaning to say; you're our best mason and I'm glad we have you. The tables in the beerhall actually make the place tolerable." That produced a grin, so she went on. "The work you've put in, getting the house up so fast and all; I guess I just wanted to say that I'm proud of you."

"Thank you," Loksvig smiled. "I'm proud of you too, Emerin. I know you're not really used to this, but you've managed to get us organised and working, all alongside the quarrywork you've been up to. Aside from these moments in the evening, I've never seen you take a break."

He looked at her in silence again, save for the gentle crackling of the fire, his eyes roving over her features. The way she wore her hair, the way her eyes could capture your own, the way the dying light of dusk framed her soft, luxuriant beard. He felt himself leaning towards her, and so did she.

Beneath a violet sky, they fell into a passionate embrace.





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And now, profiles!

'Frey' Oddomsterus has been quite content lately. He dined in a fantastic dining room recently. He has complained of the lack of chairs lately. He admired a fine Floor Hatch lately. He talked with a friend lately. He slept without a proper room recently. He has been satisfied at work lately.  
He is an ardent worshipper of Nish the East Wanderer of Wheels.  
He is a citizen of The Searing Crypts. He is a member of The Free Prison.  
'Frey' Oddomsterus likes Raw adamantine, Pig iron, Morion, black bear leather, coral, the color amber, waves, leather armor, long skirts, donkeys for their stubbornness and wolves for their cunning.  
He has a calm demeanor. He occasionally overindulges. He is relaxed. He is not a risk-taker. He isn't given to flights of fancy. He dislikes intellectual discussions. He lacks confidence. He finds rules confining. He needs alcohol to get through the working day. He likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.

'Emerin' Dodókatham has been ecstatic lately. She dined in a fantastic dining room recently. She talked with a friend lately. She became caught up in a new romance recently. She slept without a proper room recently. She has complained of the lack of chairs lately. She has been satisfied at work lately.  
She is romantically involved with 'Loksvig' Toollash. She is a worshipper of Deler the Tin Oil.  
She is the leader of The Free Prison. She is a citizen of The Searing Crypts. She is a member of The Free Prison. She is the broker of The Free Prison.  
'Emerin' Dodókatham likes Slate, Adamantine, Clear zircon, the color green-yellow, goblets and cougars for their cunning. She absolutely detests purring maggots.  
She is a nervous wreck. She cracks easily under pressure. She is not a risk-taker. She is candid and sincere in dealings with others. She would rather intimidate others than compromise with them. She finds rules confining. She takes time when making decisions. She needs alcohol to get through the working day. She likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.

'Broose' Zondesor has been happy lately. He dined in a fantastic dining room recently. He talked with a friend lately. He made a friend recently. He admired a fine Door lately. He slept without a proper room recently. He has complained of the lack of chairs lately. He has been satisfied at work lately.  
He is a dubious worshipper of Gigin.  
He is a citizen of The Searing Crypts. He is a member of The Free Prison.  
'Broose' Zondesor likes Malachite, Electrum, Yellow spessartine, Tower-cap, giant bat leather, amber, the color pumpkin, low boots, backpacks, hatch covers, crowns, catapult parts and horses for their strength.  
He rarely feels discouraged. He doesn't often experience strong cravings or urges. He prefers to be alone. He isn't given to flights of fancy. He is naturally trustful of everybody. He is guarded in relationships with others. He does not go out of his way to help others. He is modest. He needs alcohol to get through the working day. He likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather. He is a hardened individual.

'Urgash Bonefetish' Urvadked has been happy lately. He dined in a fantastic dining room recently. He admired a fine Bed lately. He slept without a proper room recently. He talked with a friend lately. He has complained of the lack of chairs lately. He has been satisfied at work lately.  
He is a worshipper of Nakas.  
He is a citizen of The Searing Crypts. He is a member of The Free Prison.  
'Urgash Bonefetish' Urvadked likes Native gold, Gold, Black opal, amulets, chains and cows for their haunting moos. When possible, he prefers to consume giant cave spider.  
He has a calm demeanor. He is unassertive. He is not a risk-taker. He is put off by authority and tradition. He doesn't go out of his way to do more work than necessary. He needs alcohol to get through the working day. He likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.

'Danielle' Zuglarvukcas has been happy lately. She dined in a fantastic dining room recently. She slept without a proper room recently. She has complained of the lack of chairs lately. She has been satisfied at work lately.  
She is a worshipper of Gigin.  
She is a citizen of The Searing Crypts. She is a member of The Free Prison. She is the manager of The Free Prison. She is the bookkeeper of The Free Prison.  
'Danielle' Zuglarvukcas likes Granite, Tin, Green zircon, stars, spears, shields and dogs for their loyalty.  
She is quick to anger. She rarely feels discouraged. She is assertive. She is candid and sincere in dealings with others. She is self-disciplined. She often does the first thing that comes to mind. She needs alcohol to get through the working day. She likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.

'Loksvig' Lõrmeng has been ecstatic lately. He dined in a fantastic dining room recently. He admired a fine Door lately. He talked with a friend lately. He became caught up in a new romance recently. He slept without a proper room recently. He has been satisfied at work lately. He has complained of the lack of chairs lately.  
He is romantically involved with 'Emerin' Claspfocus. He is a faithful worshipper of Nakas.  
He is a citizen of The Searing Crypts. He is a member of The Free Prison.  
'Loksvig' Lõrmeng likes Shale, Trifle pewter, Yellow spessartine, pearl, large gems and goblets. He absolutely detests purring maggots.  
He is quick to anger. He is absolutely unfazed by the opinions of others. He doesn't handle stress well. He does not go out of his way to help others. He is not easily moved to pity. He needs alcohol to get through the working day. He likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.

'Fath' Ninurolon has been happy lately. He dined in a fantastic dining room recently. He made a friend recently. He slept without a proper room recently. He talked with a friend lately. He has complained of the lack of chairs lately. He has been satisfied at work lately.  
He is a casual worshipper of Onol the Tin Silver.  
He is a citizen of The Searing Crypts. He is a member of The Free Prison.  
'Fath' Ninurolon likes Talc, Nickel silver, Gray chalcedony, pearl and maces. When possible, he prefers to consume giant bat.  
He isn't given to flights of fancy. He is trusting. He is candid and sincere in dealings with others. He is not affected by the suffering of others. He needs alcohol to get through the working day. He likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival In The Desert**

Post by: **Enzo** on **May 11, 2009, 12:26:10 am**

Every time I read an update I want to post and say how awesome it is. It's a little redundant at this point but BRAVO SIR. These are captivating and usually hilarious.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival (Community/Fugitives)**

Post by: **ousire** on **May 11, 2009, 12:33:00 am**

you planning on making this like the olonkulet that maggarg 'invented'? brimming with traps everywhere, and every aspect of the fort possible done with machines?

if so, i just gotta have a dwarf :P name him ousire, and make him a mechanic. possibly give him a bit of seige engeneeing too if ya plan on having balistas

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival (Community/Fugitives)**

Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **May 11, 2009, 01:07:30 am**

Hmm. I guess Emerin's the leader. Bow down before your diamond queen! And I guess the siege engineering king consort, too.

I have a question. We all got backgrounds into what crimes our dwarves committed, and how they escaped, except for Frey. What crime did he commit? Or is that a story secret? Is he the lost heir to the throne of some dwarven civilization or something? Is he a king in exile? Will we find out next time, on Olonkulet?

I don't want you to force your hand or anything, of course. I'm just interested, is all.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **May 11, 2009, 10:56:34 am**

i was going to make something up about Loksvig, but he's already cool.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 11, 2009, 12:06:46 pm**

Well, I just have to say I'm enjoying the story considerably. So, very well done Iituem. I hope you do the legend of Olonkulet justice.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 11, 2009, 05:02:09 pm**

*Danielle's Inventory*  
1st Haematite, 351

First harvest of the year! We're looking at a crop of 20+ firecaps, and it won't take me long to replenish that either. Broose grumbled at the news, but he grumbles at everything. For some reason most of the others aren't that interested in, as Broose put it; "hours of fun at the cesspit". I'm sure I have no idea what they mean. Still, everyone is waiting for the glowcap harvest; we're all getting horribly close to sobriety these days and the liquor stock is pushing the half-way mark now. Let's hope this doesn't last.

14th Malachite, 351

The glowcaps are fruiting, and we have been blessed with a massive harvest - nearly a dozen caps are being harvested. Praise be to Nakas for this bounty! Such fruits are worth two and a half times their weight in firecaps, once properly processed! Twelve barrels of glow wine should not only give us plenty of light in the evenings but also aqssuage the worst of our drinking problems. I have suggested a small shrine atop the western spire; Fath has promised to carve out a kaolinite statue for the pinnacle.

23rd Malachite, 351

The piles of glowcaps lie in the stores now, glowing faintly. Urgash has set up the fermenting vats and the glowcaps are merrily rotting away. Within a couple of weeks we should have our first batch of glow wine.

**Vignette - A Toast to Revelry**  
*9th Galena, 351*

Urgash drained off the first barrel of glow wine to great applause from the other dwarves, tapping it and drawing a half-pint into a stiff leather cup. He sniffed the liquor slightly and took a sip as the crowd watched with general anticipation. Wiping the froth from his beard, he commented;

"It's sour, flat and tastes of butterscotch, but by the gods it's *booze!*"

Soon after, the dwarves gathered around the pinnacle of the spire where the farms had been dug out, mugs of gently glowing liquor in hand and watching Fath slide the finished statue into place on the smoothed floor of the shrine. The statue was of a full-bodied female dwarf grasping a mug of ale in one hand and a freshly-baked crumpet in the other, wearing a sash over a dress and an expression of bemused exuberance. The off-white boulder of kaolinite used to carve the statue had a thin red streak of minerals running through it, so the sash had been carved with this in mind and bore numerous simplified depictions of harvest, glowcap fermentation and general revelry.

Fath stepped back and, taking his mug from Danielle, raised it in a toast.

"To Nakas," he called. "May the lass be honoured for her bountiful harvest!"

"To Revelry!" came a staggered cry from the other dwarves, who clinked their mugs together and drank. Frey, who remembered such things, led them in a rough hymn to Nakas before ending the brief ceremony with another cheer and toast.

By the time evening was approaching, the dwarves had become firmly rooted in the beerhall and a fair number of mugs of the new glow wine had already been spent in the celebration of revelry. Faintly shimmering stains covered the chalk tabletops. Urgash had carved a flute from a camel bone and was playing tunes whilst Loksvig and Emerin danced a jig to general merriment. Even Broose was enjoying the scene in his own gruff, silent way. The tune came to an end and Loksvig and Emerin slumped against the wall, laughing with exhausted joy.

"A good dance!" called Urgash, swapping his flute for his mug and raising it. There was another cheer and perfuntory round of quaffing. "May I also say," he added, "how pleased I am with the new slaughterhouse district? It's made my life a lot easier."

"District, eh?" laughed Loksvig. "You make it sound like we're building a city! This time next year, the wagons will be built and we'll be long gone, I daresay." He drained a bit of his mug and, wiping froth from his beard, continued; "What's your plan for that, anyhow? Where are you going after we get out of this?"

"Head north, maybe," mused Urgash. "Away from the Mountainhomes. Some of the bitches are pregnant, so maybe I could start a dog farm. There's good money in it, once you've got a few decent packs going. What about you?"

"Well Emerin and I," said Loksvig, with a smile at his partner, "were looking at going south from Kulettögum, maybe all the way to Nist Akath."

"Nist Akath?" exclaimed Fath. "Innae that some manner of ice-cover'd hellhole?"

"Used to be," said Emerin, "but the dwarf who founded it? Captain Ironblood? They say he's really turned it around. Plus I hear there's work for gemcutters there and, well, diamonds are a girl's best friend!" Emerin grinned. "What about you, Fath? What'll you do when this is all over?"

"Well I've been pondering a lot about this whole 'thinking machine' lark," said Fath, "and I reckon I could really make something of it, y'know? Few assistants, decent brassworker and I'm pretty sure I can show them, ahah, show them all."

"What about our favourite silent soldier?" asked Emerin, nodding to Broose. The axedwarf looked up from his ale and chewed on the question for a while before answering.

"Reckon I'll head on to Kulettögum, he said. "Work for a soldier there, all the salt I could need. Lumber, too, so I'll be in pocket during peacetime. Dani?"

"I reckon I'll head to Kulettögum too," decided Danielle. "Probably get some work at the farms there, and I can try and convert them over to the firecap standard. So what about you, Frey? What do you want to do?"

"Hadn't really thought about it," confessed Frey, taking a sip from his mug.

"There must be something you want from life," prodded Emerin.

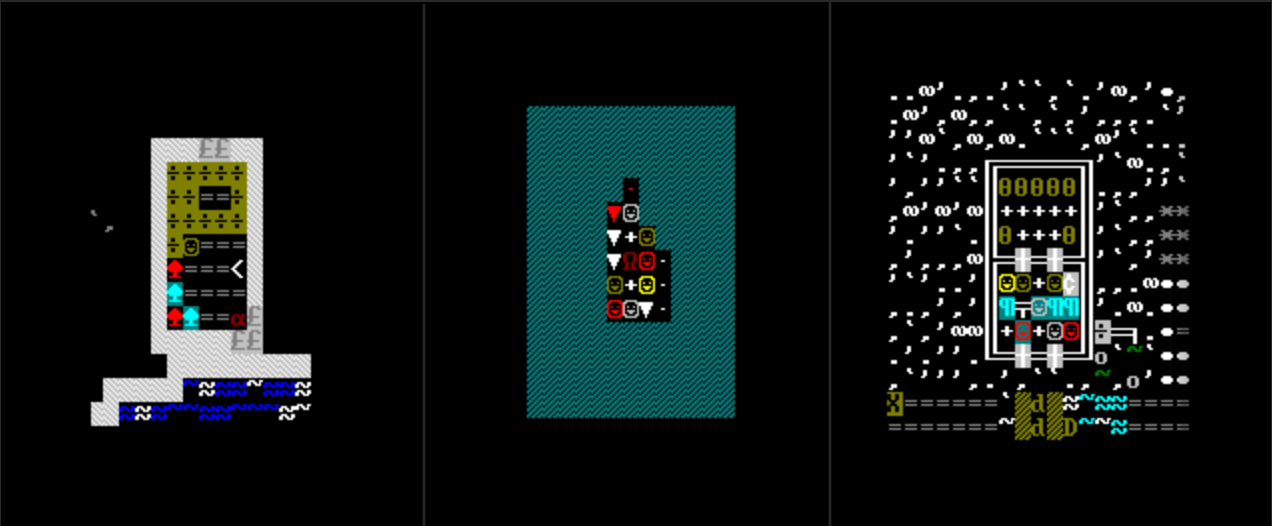
"Well," said Frey, "for a long time now I was after something, but I finally got it and since then I've just been going day by day, really. When I was a kid though, back before the wars, I used to want to run my own mine. I guess I could look into that. Heck, I could probably come back here!"

"Here?" laughed Fath. "You're kidding me."

"No, seriously. There's plenty of magnetite deposits in the region, lots of gemstones and no shortage of chalk. Importing the coal would be expensive, but I reckon if I came back with a properly equipped expedition this could be made into a decent steelworks."

"Ah, that's all to the future anyway," he chuckled, waving a hand dismissively. "Urgash, strike up another tune, will you? If Loksvig can untether himself from his beau for a few minutes I should like to have a dance."

Laughter followed, Urgash began to play another jig, and the revelry continued on into the night.



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Yes, this is *that* Olonkulet. Sure doesn't look like a mechanical deathtrap now, right?

As I said, I've been wanting to write this one for a year or so now and I finally decided to just go for it. If I want to be a better writer, I basically have to just keep writing, and this is an excellent little exercise for that. :D

If you guys want to write additional bits of backstory for your characters, feel free. I'll try and incorporate them/references to them where I can. Apologies to Maggarg for liberties taken with Loksvig, as well. The good news is that he already knows how this ends, and there *will* (memory permitting) be a child escapee from the fortress' ultimate face by the name of Oddbod.

P.S. Frey isn't the lost heir to the throne, I'll give you that much. Certainly not *now*.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **sonero** on **May 11, 2009, 08:19:18 pm**

May I ask what Olonkulet is? Several searches brought up nothing and it sounds both fun and entertaining.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Broose** on **May 11, 2009, 08:54:08 pm**

It is a fort mentioned a couple times in the Waterbore thread. The city was essentially a large machine made of brass.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 11, 2009, 09:14:32 pm**

*Urgash's Journal*  
1st Limestone, 351

The bitches gave birth today, both of them! One litter of two, one of four. Our dog population has literally doubled in the space of six months, which is looking very promising. I know we are starting to get a bit tired of goat and marmot and many of us would look forward to a decent spot of hound. Still, Loksvig says the caravan will be arriving in the next couple of months; we can buy tools and wood for the wagons, and if we can't get any more beasts of burden then on the bright side it will only be another few months before the pups are strong enough to be harnessed with their parents and drag a cart. We risked a bit more lumber to build a cage for them, as it's important to keep one's beasts safe where possible.

14th Limestone, 351

The caravan has been sighted! We lit a fire to attract them and, sure enough, they are headed towards the encampment now. It should be a day or so before they arrive, so we're going to be busy getting as many goods ready to trade for tools and parts as we can.

**Vignette: Changing Times**  
*16th Limestone, 351*

"What the hell is going on?" yelled Emerin, keeping Fath's crossbow pointed firmly at the figure's chest. Before her and behind her target, three marksdwarves had their own bows levelled at her and a pair of axedwarves held their weapons ready to attack. The figure raised his hands carefully.

"Now," he said, "if we can all just put our weapons down this can be handled perfectly--"

"An elf!" she shrieked, waving the crossbow dangerously. "Why in Gigin's own name are you dwarves following an *elf*?"

"Because," explained the elf as the other dwarves of the camp rushed onto the scene, "I am the trade liason for the Searing Crypts."

Emerin was dumbstruck.

"But how?" she demanded.

"By order of Her Majesty the Queen, Atis Alathsat."

"What are you talking about?" barked Broose from the edge of the trade depot. He advanced, axe held carefully in both hands. "The King doesn't have a wife!"

"Ye-es," agreed the liason. "I understand that was something of the problem." He looked over the puzzled faces of the dwarves, surprised. "You honestly didn't know?"

"Know what?" said Emerin.

"The King is dead. Slain during a prison break six months ago."

A dead silence rang out across the depot as this sank in. Frey even dropped his pick from the shock. Taking this as his cue, the elf signalled the marksdwarves to lower their bows and continued to explain.

"Someone was able to get into the throne room during the chaos and caved in the monarch's skull with some manner of sharp object, probably a weighted shiv or axe. Nobody could find the killer amid all the chaos, and a large number of convicts escaped that day. With no heir and no clear blood relatives, the kingdom was thrown into a power struggle and weakened. That was when the elves struck."

"Your people," muttered Fath darkly.

"Not quite. My liege - *our* liege was a general on the attacking side. She met up with a dwarf captain on the defending side, a deal was made and she thwarted the Elven invasion. Those of us who chose to defect with her were given positions within the kingdom and she took possession of the monarchy."

"How do we know to trust you?" asked Danielle.

"Trust your eyes," said the elf, spreading his arms. The dwarves considered the picture before them. Although unmistakably an elf, he did not seem quite as Elvish as those they had met in the past. He wore a brocaded silk cloak, trousers and gloves, dyed pure paledome white, a dogskin leather jerkin and a pair of royal purple silk shoes. The dwarves around him paid him a deference, albeit begrudgingly, and seemed willing to fight for his safety. Outlandish as his story was, it seemed to ring true.

"My name is Datan Fathlakish," said the elf, stepping forward and offering a hand to Emerin. She looked at it suspiciously before taking it in hand and shaking it, squeezing just a little too hard on those delicate elven bones. The liason winced visibly, pulling his hand back once the shake was complete. "And you are?"

"Urist," said Emerin, lowering the bow and thinking of the first name to come to her head. "Urist Stonesalves."

The elf reached backward and a dwarf handed him a book. He thumbed through the pages.

"Urist," he murmured, searching. "Urist Stonesalves. Aha. Wanted for grand tax fraud and, of course, escape from a prison." The elf grinned as Emerin cursed her choice of name. "What's the bounty on a handful of white-beard criminals, Likot?"

"Not much," growled one of the guards. "Three gold coins, maybe."

"So cheap? You should be insulted, my dear dwarf, that the kingdom thinks so little of your crimes. Too little, perhaps, to waste dragging your seven sorry bodies back to the Mountainhomes." The elf nodded to the table full of goathide waterskins and miscellaneous bone jewellery.

"Three of those each," he said with surprisingly dwarven frankness, "and we forget we saw you. Reckon any of those must be worth a gold or three, and none of them are nearly so weighty as you lot. What do you say?" Emerin twitched at such blatant blackmail, then reminded herself of the guards. She nodded and Datan clapped his hands together with delight.

"Excellent!" he cheered. "Now then, I notice you have all these goods out. Perhaps we can do a spot of trade? What is it that you poor miscreants need?"

"Wagon parts," said Emerin. "Tools, otherwise, to build them. Wood for certain." The liason mused.

"Nope," he said, "can't help you with any of those. We're trading to Abbeyverse, and they have plenty enough of all three. Tools, the best I can do for you would be to sell you an anvil. We've a ton of those, and they're always a bastard to shift. Still, with an anvil you can make tools, though I'm afraid we don't have fuel to actually heat a forge with either."

"What about out of here?"

"What, like a lift? This isn't a stage coach, treacle stump, and the folks at Abbeyverse might get a bit suspicious if I suddenly rode into town with seven new merchants." He considered it for a moment, then pointed to Broose. "Him, I could take. Pass him off as a guard, and the fee will be fifty gold or equivalent. Rest of you, not going to happen. What do you say?"

All eyes turned to Broose. The dwarf planted his axe in the ground and leant on it, stroking his beard in silence.

"You're actually going to leave us?" said a shocked Emerin.

"Considering," grunted Broose, who was now studying the elf.

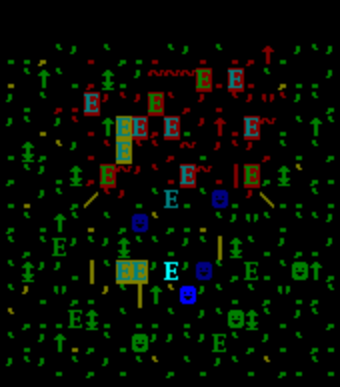
"Come on, lad, I can get you out of this place," said Datan. "What do you say?"

"I say," said Broose after a long pause, "that either we all go, or none of us go."

"Then none of you go," said the elf. "Sorry, but that's the way it is. Ferrying the seven of you just isn't worth my hide. Now, are we going to trade or what?"

Emerin agreed and settled down with the elf to try and barter some goods out of him, eventually securing a new anvil for toolmaking, some paledome and redbulb spawns and a fresh supply of glow wine. The others slunk back to their various jobs, soaking in the news they had just received.





Stray Puppy <Tame>	Tame
Stray Puppy <Tame>	Tame
Zon Buketurdim, Merchant	Merchant
Thikut Bufutlogem, Merchant	Merchant
Libash Delethsodel, Merchant	Merchant
Zuglar itebakam, Merchant	Merchant
Datan Fathlakish, Elf Outpost Liaison	Diplomat
Bëmbul Atheldeler, Hammerdwarf	Merchant
Feb âmidducim, Marksdwarf	Merchant
Thikut Obokker, Axedwarf	Merchant
Dodók Alâthottan, Swordsdwarf	Merchant
Palm Wagon	Merchant
Horse	Merchant
Horse	Merchant
Palm Wagon	Merchant
Horse	Merchant
Horse	Merchant
Donkey	Merchant
Mule	Merchant
v: ViewCre, c: Zoom-Cre, b: Zoom-Bld, m: Manager, r: Remv Cre	
ûthirmomuz, "The Searing Crypts", Dwarven	
Atîs Alâthsat	Ruler/Elf Queen
Litast Usendakost	Mayor
Likot âstmedtob	Recruit
Enina Olovacele	Local Leader
Dumat Kelurmim	Local Leader
Dôbar Saziredtûl Nebélemâth Irid	Recruit
Reg Kankib	Local Leader
Litast Mafolusân	Mayor
Bëmbul Zatamtirist	Local Leader
Eral Ustuthrobek	Local Leader
Mörul Kônatîs	Elf Recruit
Monom Medtohbhardum	Elf Recruit
Shorast itebtost	Mayor
Liyîyi Eriÿaamiÿa	Local Leader
Kadol Zanegîngiz	Peasant
Atîs Stukosaknûn	Mayor
Tab to change modes.	

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Olonkulet is pretty much Maggarg's invention. The concept struck me as fascinating to do a story around, so I've opted to do so. I've seen it mentioned in the Dwarven Pol Pot thread as well, with the same general theme; a brass machine-city that closed its doors upon the world with only a handful of children surviving to tell the world.

The original design was to not to do Olonkulet being founded, but the reclaim expedition in which what happened to Olonkulet would be revealed. However I find this way is proving to be rather more enjoyable, especially with all the little backstories people have provided for me to work with! It's turning out rather more character-driven than I expected.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **May 11, 2009, 09:35:39 pm**

sooo.....the dwarvish civ is ruled by **elves?**

no wonder olonkulet closed itself off from the world....

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **May 11, 2009, 11:10:33 pm**

This is shaping up to be as epic as Nist Akath and Boatmurdered. I especially like the ASCII art you have thats showing the smaller scenes. Adds a nice touch. Id also like to request a dwarf:

Male  
Name: Ragnar

Backstory: A former Captain of the Guard, from before the others in this story were even born, he refused to beat dwarves for crimes not committed by them. This eventually irked the nobles enough to have him tossed out of the city, forcing him into exile. Unwilling to leave to far from his city, he simply carved out his own living area in the Old City, a little ways from the waterway that Emerin and Co went down. There he made use of the abandoned workshops, farms and forges, and survived for many, many years. Lately though, the sounds of civil unrest have been filtering up through the locks, and he saw a boat packed with dwarves heading downriver. A few weeks later, military sweeps for the escaped convicts finally forced him out of his home, leading him to head downriver, where he stumbled upon the others.

Apperance: A military dwarf, still wearing excellent, albeit extremely battered and worn armor, he is scarred from head to toe. His battle experience would be legendary, if any were still alive that remembered him. He carries a notched, battle worn blade, that he forged himself during his campaigns in the army before becoming Captain.

Personality: Hardworking and quiet, he will give help wherever needed and will never harm those incapable of defending themselves. He will also never harm anybody that evidently didnt do something wrong, a trait that led to his forced exile.

Skill: Swordsdwarf in times of trouble, anything else during times of peace (providing for yourself for years will definitely net you a grab bag of random skills). Once you get some more workers to fill out labor tasks, he'll switch over to full time military.

Thanks in advance, and keep up the great story!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival (Community/Fugitives)**

Post by: **Enzo** on **May 12, 2009, 12:24:20 am**

Elves? *ELVES?* This calls for some serious ethnic cleansing. And I don't say that very often. :P

Quote from: Iituem on May 11, 2009, 05:02:09 pm

If you guys want to write additional bits of backstory for your characters, feel free.

Well...alright :) Although Urgash is pretty damn cool already. If you desire:

Urgash secretly always wanted to be a soapmaker, but his father wouldn't allow it because of the Dwarven stigma surrounding soapmakers (they are useless).

Also, he's obsessive about using all parts of the animal, hence his skillset. Not sure how well I implied this.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival (Community/Fugitives)**

Post by: **Broose** on **May 12, 2009, 12:40:42 am**

Broose secretly loves elves. This should make things interesting.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival (Community/Fugitives)**

Post by: **Enzo** on **May 12, 2009, 12:42:50 am**

I was wondering why he would consider going with the elf *for even a second*.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival (Community/Fugitives)**

Post by: **Iituem** on **May 12, 2009, 06:17:08 am**

*Urgash's Journal*  
20th Sandstone, 351

We encountered a kobold today, rifling through the goods being taken down from the depot stalls. Frey immediately went for it with his pick, but not before the dogs descended on it as a pack and tore it limb from limb. It was hard to say who actually managed the killing blow, but we've settled on the one hound, a bitch who has been named Mengatast in honour of the victory. She got a little bit of fresh goat meat in her bowl today as a reward.

6th Timber, 351

The river froze over again today and looks to be staying that way until the coming spring. It doesn't look like we'll be out until then, so Danielle has asked Frey and Emerin to dig out a flooding chamber for the new year.

9th Moonstone, 351

The full complement of workbuildings is now complete. Our supplies should tide us through the winter, though the lack of barrels to store things (esp. liquor) in is growing intolerable. We dare not risk any further wood lest we have insufficient to prepare the wagons with in spring.

7th Obsidian, 351

Everyone is keeping busy; it takes off the worst of the cold. We might be working into spring on the wagons, so Fath designed some more spacious accomodation for us. There might be a bit of double-rooming (something Emerin and Loksvig have no problem with, har har har), but it's a damn sight better than the barracks we're in at the moment. The work is keeping us in good spirits, at any rate. With all the browncaps yielded over the year, we must've pressed out about seventy tins' worth of brown chow and I've baked the majority of that into rations for the winter and gruel. It might not be appetising, but it's sure as hell filling.

**Vignette: My Old Ore Cart**

*28th Obsidian, 351*

"Born this afternoon they were," said Urgash, gesturing to the corner of the room with his mug. A bitch and two tiny pups were curled up in a stiff leather basket, covered with Urgash's cloak.

"Sign of prosperity, that," said Frey sagely. He took a swig of liquor and looked up at the solid chalk roof. Like the rest of the little apartment, it was decidedly spartan save for where Urgash had hung a glowbowl from the ceiling on some twine. "You taking this one, then?"

"I reckon so, aye. Close to the cages and the slaughterhouse, but not so close as to be noisy. You?"

"Any's as good as another. Might have to end up bunking with Broose, though." Frey rolled his eyes. "That's going to be a charm. At least he won't be bunking with Fath, I'm pretty sure one would eventually opt to murder the other."

"Actually," confessed Urgash sheepishly, "I'll be bunking with Dani." He spread his hands and grinned.

"You old rogue!" Frey laughed. "When did that happen?"

"Last week, when she was picking up the browncap spawns after I'd finished pressing them. We got to talking and, well, I guess she liked what she heard. We've been keeping quiet about it, what with all the work going on, but there's no real reason to hide it." The pair left the vacant apartments and wended back to the beerhall, mugs in hand, where bright lights and Broose's loud, tuneless singing voice from within indicated the new year festivities were still ongoing. Urgash cringed slightly at the rendition of 'My Old Ore Cart', this version tarted up with extra verses about beards and gold.

"Speaking of which," he asked, "how are you finding the winter rations?"

"It's brown chow," replied Frey shrewdly. "One step below gruel and one step above mushed-up straw. Give you credit, though, there's always a bit of meat in there. Fat, too. That stew can keep a dwarf warm over winter."

"There's plenty more meat in an animal than most folk reckon," said Urgash sagely. "I'd have a bit more bonemeal in there if I could help it, but not really got the tools for that."

"Ye-es, I noticed the camel brain casserole last week had a suspiciously gritty 'pastry' to it. Please don't do that again, Fath nearly choked and I had to give him my liquor ration to wash it down."

The pair leant on the door frame, watching the scene inside as Broose (who had imbibed enough glow wine to actually turn jolly) was trying to balance a marmot skull totem on his nose whilst singing the fourteenth verse of 'My Old Ore Cart' (the sixth regarding beards and the ninth specifically relating to gold)\*.

"It's been a good year, hasn't it?" asked Urgash.



"Yeah," agreed Frey, "all said and done. I imagine we're all ready to go, though. I'm getting sick of glow wine, for one. Decent imported ale would go down a treat."

"Truer words have ne'er been spoken, my friend. Dani's still got her heart set on converting Kulettögum to the firecap standard and it'd make a good place to set up the dog farm by. How's the wagon going?"

"Not well. Fath's a good architect, but he's not a carpenter. None of us are. It looks like we might end up needing metal springs for the wheels too, which means either getting hold of parts or sacrificing more wood to forge some from the local materials. Loksvig reckons we can try and get hold of a human trade caravan on its way south, but even so we might be stuck here for a while longer waiting for that. Still, end of the year, right?"

"Aye, Frey. End of the year." Urgash raised his mug. "Here's to getting out of here, my friend."

"I'll drink to that."

They touched mugs and did so, then stepped into the room in time for the twenty-second round and joined in the riotous chorus of 'Adamantine!'. Heralded by revelry, the world turned and a new year began.

*\*In which the protagonist of the folk song has accumulated in his ore cart a store of limonite, haematite, magnetite, malachite, rhyolite, cryolite, chromite, quartzite, phyllite, bauxite, cobaltite, calcite, lignite, and is currently in the process of obtaining kimberlite. He has also obtained 8193 mugs of ale, an assortment of gold jewellery, several finely-bearded wenches and a kitten. As with all such litanies, every single item is reiterated in each verse. The song continues for as many verses as the singer can keep up with and eventually ceases when the protagonist discovers 'Borax' and realises there are no other minerals that rhyme. Dwarf folk songs tend to be written with heavy inebriation and a highly specialised set of interests in mind.*

Olonkulet in the New Year (<http://www.mkv25.net/dfma/map-5779-gearabbeyes>)

Edit: Fixed link.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **May 12, 2009, 11:05:44 am**

link at the end dont work D:

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Remalle** on **May 12, 2009, 12:25:16 pm**

I love your writing. Do you think you'll actually have enough copper and zinc to make a computer?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Rysith** on **May 12, 2009, 06:17:24 pm**

I would love to join in this fortress.

Name: Rahxs if male, Jora if female  
Profession: Swordsdwarf. Pirate. Adventurer!  
Backstory:

Once the [son|daughter] of a minor noble, [he|she] fled to avoid an arranged marriage, and was forced to take up, in varying measures, thievery, piracy, and eventually freelance adventuring to survive. Has based [his|her] persona largely on the stories that [he|she] read growing up, and so has a tendency to be overdramatic and swashbuckling-y. Eventually finding Olonkulet, [he|she] decided that it would be as good a place as any to settle down, since the dwarves here were at least open-minded about dwarves who hadn't always been on the right side of the law. [He|She] is happy to pick up any job that needs to be done if there isn't a need for a swordsdwarf of a sword to wield, but would prefer to be off being heroic if [he|she] can.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **May 12, 2009, 07:12:43 pm**

yay fixed link! :D

its gonna be interesting to see how this evolves from this simple little mini-village, into its eventual form of an insane and twisted mechanical wonder.... \*bwahahaha!\*

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Kanute** on **May 12, 2009, 10:54:26 pm**

Always enjoy your stories!

Name: Yngwie  
Gender: female  
Profession: Metalsmith  
Crime: Defacing coins, people

The only child of two smithdwarves, Yngwie grew up in comfort. Her parents' relative prosperity ensured that she was trained in delicate metalworking, and she later went on to create a successful business in smithing personalized chairs for dwarves, the chair having complete geneologies and other fineries inlaid in expensive metals. She expanded her business to create chests and other furnitures, each piece a unique and exquisitely made artwork. Before long she became moderately famous for her various furniture pieces and so it seemed only natural that she start making statues, instead (metal statues being a more noble artform). Yngwie would look at a dwarf and then try to create a likeness out of the metal, and every time a statue was unveiled, it would lack any sort of resemblance to the dwarf in question. This continued for many months, and she slowly lost all respect and riches and sunk into a deep depression. One alcohol-deprived night, as she was fixing the face of a coin (which had a version of the king where, due to a faulty mold in the royal mints, the nose was humorously large), she realized what had gone wrong. The statues were immaculate, perfect; the error lay in the dwarf. Possibly in the eye of the dwarven beholder.

She was caught attempting to "fix" a previous customer's face with a metalworker's hammer.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Survival (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 13, 2009, 08:05:17 am**

*Emerin's Log*  
15th Granite, 352

Elves arrived today. We initially assumed a return from the Liason, but these were a pair of merchants with donkeys and no wagons, and Broose informs me they are wearing heather and lintgrass coats and dresses in various shades of azure, mauve and periwinkle. We have

carted out our little bin of bloodcrafts, as well as the clothing from that kobold, which we have discovered to be of surprisingly fine giant cave spider silk. To celebrate the occasion, six new pups were born to Urgash's increasingly full cages. He had better throw a gods-damned banquet when those pups come of age, he has so many! I'm not sure what he feeds them. Vermin, mostly, I should imagine.

17th Granite, 352

We traded with the elves for a few punnets of exotic fruits (dukefruit and shadeberries) as well as a couple of barrels of scavenger's brew and decent sacramental wine, plus a rare Elven drink called "nature's blood". Sounds suspiciously like our own bloodwine, but they let me have a thimble of the stuff and it was bloody marvellous for something vinted by an elf. They even let us have a few logs of wood (which they treated like bloody deities, I might add), though nowhere near enough for any major work on the wagon. We offered them a roof for the night before they continue on their journey, but they said they preferred to sleep beneath the stars. Bloody elves.

**Vignette: Sapling's Slumber**  
*17th Granite, 352*

Urgash approached the two Elven traders, carrying a pair of bowls of hot stew. The elves were sat beneath the clear night sky, conversing rapidly in their fluidic tongue, but stopped when they noticed Urgash approaching. They stared at him silently as he got closer, a habit that Urgash frankly found disturbing. He tried to put a cheerful face over it and greeted them in as friendly a manner as he could manage, offering them the bowls.

"I figured with you folks being our guests and all you might get hungry," he said. The elves took the proffered bowls and sniffed them cautiously.

"What is this?" one of them asked.

"We call it brown chow. I didn't put any meat in these, on account of you being elves, but there's a bit of extra spice for flavour." Small chunks of red-brown mushroom poked out of the thick brown gruel. The elf picked up the spoon in the bowl, tasted a little and did his level best to try and swallow all of the mouthful as gracefully as he could.

"Thank you," he said in stilted dwarfish. "Your kindness is welcomed most. I am named Nisa."

"I am named Nine," added the other.

"Well, I'm Urgash," said Urgash. "Nice to meet you, I guess." An awkward pause followed as the elves continued to stare at him. He attempted to break it by asking another question. "So where are you folks going?"

"Loyaraafe," said Nisa. "You would say 'The Imprisoned Fangs', yes?"

"Would I?" wondered Urgash. "Right. That's an elf place?" Nisa nodded.

"Home... place," he explained, searching for the words. "We go to... town but not like this. Trees. More... Holy?"

Urgash chose to leave that be. He looked at the ground between the two elves, where they had piled a small heap of sand and made it damp with water from the brook, then surrounded it with a handful of smooth river pebbles. The pebbles appeared to be arranged in specific, geometric patterns.

"What are you doing there?" he asked. The elves looked at the soil, then at him and finally at each other, conversing for a moment in their tongue and shrugging to each other. Nine beckoned the dwarf a little closer and gestured to the clump of dirt. He wet his fingers with a bit of gruel from the bowl, then traced in between the stones, whispering in a more sibilant variant of the Elvish tongue. Urgram watched in some amazement as, over a period of five minutes, a tiny shoot poked up through the little mound of earth and spread out its little spindly leaves. Nisa studied it for a moment when Nine had completed his strange rite.

"The Force is weak here," explained Nisa. "It sleeps. It sleeps for a long time. Maybe until the world is made again."

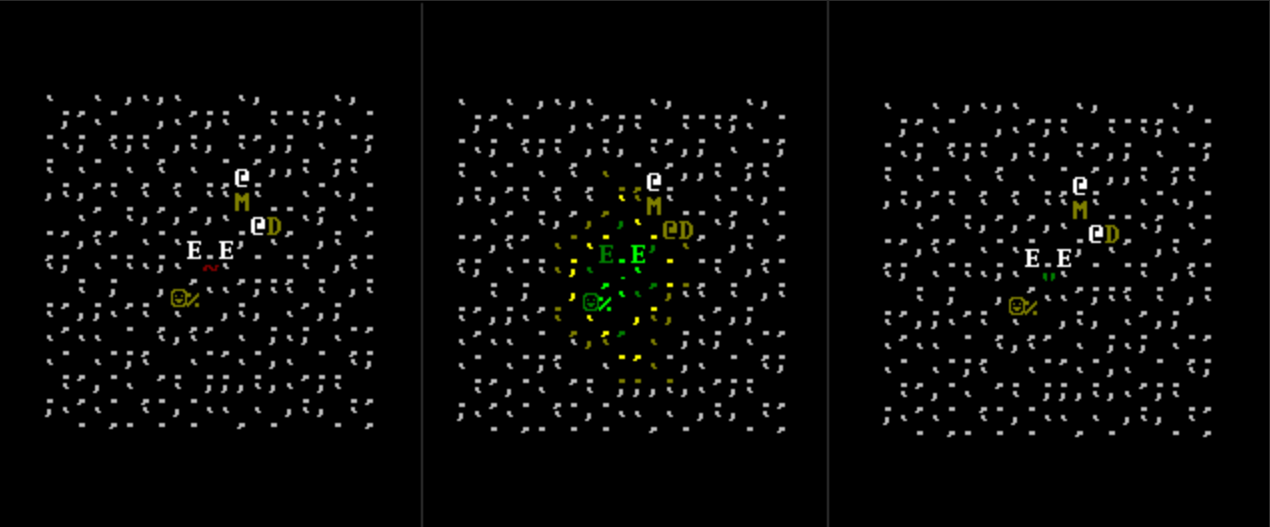
"What you did with that shoot," said Urgash, "could you do it with other plants here? Trees, maybe?" The elf shook his head.

"No. The Force will not wake from slumber. It has little strength, and to bend it unwillingly is not our way."

"It would be mighty useful, though. We could use the wood." The elf looked at Urgash sadly and shook his head.

"You do not understand. Maybe one day you will. Or not. Thank you for the food."

The two elves returned to their study of the desert shrub and Urgash felt himself dismissed. He left them, taking away a strange sense of mixed wonder and alienation.



NB: Artistic license was taken to demonstrate the magic used here. The rite described in the text, without any bright lights or similar effects, is truer to style.

*Emerin's Log*  
17th Slate, 352

Broose spotted a small trail of dwarves headed for our encampment today, following the river from the north. They don't appear to be merchants or militia. Why would anyone be coming *here*?



Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 13, 2009, 08:21:07 am**

CHAPTER TWO: REFUGE

*Emerin understood the concept behind democracy\* quite well; when six people put their vote to you and you didn't accept their ruling, what they said happened or you wouldn't find yourself in a fit state to take part in making the next decision. She reasoned that monarchy worked on a similar principle, except with axes and hammers acting as vote-multipliers. If you put your vote to six peasants and your axe and armour counted for six votes by themselves, you passed your resolution pretty quickly.*

*Insightful as this political analysis was, it did nothing to prepare her for the arrival and demands of nineteen immigrants on her doorstep, beyond making her acutely aware that nineteen pairs of fists could pass some pretty decisive resolutions if you handled them poorly.*

"Ho!" cried Broose as the first pair of dwarves in the trail trudged into the middle of the encampment. They looked bedraggled and beaten. "What business brings you here?"

"Sanctuary," breathed one of the dwarves in desperation, propping himself up with his pickaxe. He tried to manage more, but slumped onto the ground from bitter exhaustion. An older dwarf in tattered leather armour, holding an ancient sword almost as battered as the dwarves, stepped forward.

"We seek refuge here," she announced, "from oppression and from the law. We are fugitives." She looked Broose over, then to the conspicuous half-demolished boat that still served as the centrepiece of the camp. "As were you."

By the time all the refugees had stumbled in, nearly nineteen in total were counted. Some had taken up seats in the beerhall, others perched on the boat; many simply dropped to the ground, grateful for respite from the days of forced marching. The migrants had even brought livestock; a breeding pair of donkeys struggled to carry what provisions and possessions they had saved, tethered to a foal and a pet dog. The miner who had collapsed, Ascubis, had been propped up against a rock and given some watered-down glow wine to try and help him recover. Urgash and Frey looked onto the scene from the doorway of one of the apartments, where the older dwarf who had spoken was being interviewed by Broose and Emerin. A couple of other dwarves, a male and female holding newer but equally broken weaponry, leant against the walls as this went on.

"They're too knackered to make much of it now," said Urgash, "but soon they're going to remember how long they've not eaten for. How long haven't they eaten for?"

"Two and a half days," said the old dwarf. "We've been tightening our belts to make do. This deep into the Dipped Moist, there aren't even coyote melons to scavenge."

"Well we're not exactly bursting with food here, but I could try and scrape together a big chow bowl for tonight and maybe some rations to put you through for a week or so. It'll set us back quite a bit, but we've got a harvest coming up soon. Should last you long enough to get to your next stop."

"No," said the old dwarf, shaking her head. "There is no next stop."

"I'm sorry," said Emerin, "but we don't have room for refugees here. We're barely surviving ourselves."

"No, you don't understand. There's nowhere to go. There's nowhere else we *can* go." Emerin stared at the old dwarf's face for a moment, then sighed deeply, running a hand through her hair.

"Look," she said. "It's Ragna, right? What did you mean about fleeing from the law and oppression? What happened to you people?"

"The Queen happened," replied Ragna darkly.

Not long after the King had been assassinated, the Mountainhomes had undergone a massive upheaval. Nearly sixty prisoners had escaped the citadel and fled into the countryside and internal factioning over the new King had led to a temporary alliance of nobles. One of the few things the oligarchs could agree on was the issue of security, given how anonymously the old King had been killed. Parties were sent into the caverns of the Mountainhomes, returning with distressing news that the city was riddled with secret passages, many of which were completely forgotten by the people who had built them. As well as filling these up, the nobility had ordered a sweep of the old, cloistered sections of the city. These brief military incursions disrupted the hermitude of an old swordsdwarf and eventually forced her out and into the countryside.

Ragna had watched the battle take place from the waterfalls in the upper mountain, the Elven army crashing against the impenetrable fortress walls of the Mountainhomes. They shouldn't have been able to get in. The walls should have held. By some treachery, the gates of the mountain were opened and the elven flood had entered. Ragna saw no more of the battle from her external view, but she later heard that the army survived inside the mountain long enough to slaughter every oligarch before nearly a third of it defected to the dwarven side. The elven general, Atis, crowned herself while her troops were still resident in the mountain and then set them about the kingdom to consolidate her rule.

Ragna, having fought in a number of wars a century prior, had little difficulty evading the army scouts and the bounty hunters alike, but along the way she had started to run into outlaws; some escapees from the prison, some wanted but never captured, all struggling to survive against the huntsdwarves. She travelled with them, leaving the worst behind her and taking some of the less villainous under her wing. They travelled as a small group of outlaws, though Ragna did her best to steer them away from outright banditry.

It was inevitable that eventually they would run into refugees. Many of the nobles had capitulated out of a desire for peace and order, but many rankled against the idea of submitting to an Elven Queen and so had to be met with war. The battles between the dwarves and

elves continued also, with human mercenaries signing on to either side. In such turmoil the sins of war bred freely; mines were flooded, grottos pillaged and collapsed, fortresses razed to the ground. Dwarves fled outpost to outpost, and some crossed the path of Ragna and her dwarves. Ragna had taken them too under her wing, protecting them as best she could from other outlaws and the predations of war and soldiers. The band had grown, moving in search of sanctuary until eventually hearing tell from a dwarven caravan guard headed north from Kulettögum of a small camp of fugitives that had escaped the Queen's eye.



"So you came here?" asked Emerin.

"As I said," answered Ragna, "there is nowhere else. The Elves declared a truce over a month ago and the Queen is focused entirely on finishing her work within the kingdom now. All the major colonies have been converted or captured, and there aren't any places left for anyone with whom the new order doesn't sit. Where would you have us turn? Kulettögum? We are not nationals, and their city is full to the brim already. Nist Akath? Less than a handful would survive the journey."

Emerin was speechless, so Frey spoke up instead.

"We need some time to consider your plea. Please, attend to your dwarves. We will return with a decision."

"Very well," said Ragna. "I will tell them that you are deliberating." She bowed her head and filed out of the apartment with the other two dwarves. Frey watched them join the group of resting dwarves, then looked back to the other founders present.

"We could just say no," he suggested quietly. "Pack them off with some provisions and tell them to try their luck with the salt mines."

"Could," said Broose, "but won't. For a start, they outnumber us three to one. That girl's lackeys looked green, but she could probably pull one over on me or you."

"If we take them on," protested Frey, "we'll need to use up wood for beds and such, even if we sit them all in a barracks. We won't have enough for the wagon."

"We may not have enough for one anyway," sighed Emerin, "and we all know we're getting nowhere with it. I did a bit of asking around while they were all filing in. One of the dwarves out there is a carpenter; a proper carpenter. Those two girls out there with the tool bags? Smelter and metalcrafter. Tools, parts and skills, which is what we need. If we can get through the trouble of housing and feeding them, we can hang on 'til summer and try and catch a human caravan, buy enough wood to build a single wagon. Once we've got one we can send you abroad to fell lumber, Broose, and have the beasts of burden drag it back. We can get wood from beyond our immediate region that way; enough to build a second wagon and from there we should pretty soon have enough wagon space to take everyone, refugees included. We can load up supplies and leave the country, make a longer journey than we could on foot and find a foreign outpost we can settle down in."

"You reckon that's what we should do?" asked Urgash.

"I reckon that's what we'll be able to sell *them*," said Emerin, nodding in the direction of the doorway. "Pardon me for saying it, but appeasing the mob out there is the more pressing issue right now."

"You make a fair point," conceded Frey. "I say we go with that plan for now."

"I don't think it's going to work," said Urgash. "We can't know how much wood the humans will bring, and that many mouths runs the risk of outstripping our food stores in less than a fortnight."

"If we're going to vote," said Emerin, "we should do it when we're all here."

"Doubt we have time," said Frey. "Your 'mob' is going to want a quick response and the others are still out harvesting the firecaps. That's two yes, one no."

"I know Loksvig would say yes," volunteered Emerin.

"I know Dani would agree with me on the supplies and say no," countered Urgash.

"I have no idea what Fath would choose," said Frey, "but if Broose is a 'yes', that's the swing vote. What do you say, Broose?"

Broose stroked his beard, weighing the options.

Ousire looked up from her tool pack and prodded Yngwie awake. A blonde-bearded dwarf with an axe at his belt had stepped out from the little block of chalk apartments and was talking to Ragna, though the exchange appeared meant for all to hear.

"We've an offer for you," said the blonde-bearded Broose.

"Let's hear it then," said Ragna.

"You, your swordsdwarves, those two metalworkers and the carpenter. You're useful to us, so we'll take you on. The rest of them, we'll give them a week's provisions and then they're on their own. Don't have the fields to feed everyone."

"That's your offer?"

"Aye. What do you say?"

Ragna stared at Broose, then stared him down. Broose glared back, awaiting her reply. The migrant dwarves looked to Ragna with hopeful and fearful expressions.

"I say," said Ragna, after a long pause, "that either we all stay, or none of us stay."



Broose nodded, then reached out and shook her hand.

"Then you all stay," he pronounced. "And for the record? If you'd taken the offer I'd have cleaved off your arm right here and fed you to the hounds. Loyalty is important."

The gathered dwarves breathed a collective sigh of relief, a couple fainting again from the stress. Urgash, sparing a faint frown for Broose, headed to the kitchen to begin brewing stew for twenty-six.

\* *democracy*: 1. (n) The dark art of ballot stuffing.

FPS: 1001	‘Ascubis’ Zaslecad, “‘Ascubis’ Crystalcleans”, Miner
‘Ascubis’ Zaslecad has been happy lately. He is a worshipper of Zas Coppercolored the Blueness of Dye. He is a citizen of The Searing Crypts. He is a member of The Free Prison. ‘Ascubis’ Zaslecad likes Quartzite, Nickel, Red spinel, Tower-cap and bucklers. When possible, he prefers to consume mule. He absolutely detests fire snakes. He has a very calm demeanor. He is quick to anger. He can handle stress. He tends to avoid crowds. He is rarely happy or enthusiastic. He appreciates art and natural beauty. He is very confident. He is disorganized. He needs alcohol to get through the working day. He likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.	
FPS: 1002	‘Ousire’ Desisathel, “‘Ousire’ Snarledring”, Furnace Operator
‘Ousire’ Desisathel has been happy lately. She was comforted by a wonderful creature in a cage recently. She admired a fine Door lately. She is a worshipper of Deler the Tin Oil. She is a citizen of The Searing Crypts. She is a member of The Free Prison. ‘Ousire’ Desisathel likes Loam, Bismuth, Tanzanite, ivory, shields and horses for their strength. She absolutely detests purring maggots. She is self-conscious. She cracks easily under pressure. She tends not to openly express emotions. She would never shy away from an opportunity to say she is better than somebody else. She is compassionate. She needs alcohol to get through the working day.	
FPS: 1004	‘Ragna’ Kikrostegdoth, “‘Ragna’ Stockadebow”, Captain
‘Ragna’ Kikrostegdoth has been quite content lately. She admired a fine Cage lately. She is a worshipper of Onol the Tin Silver. She is a citizen of The Searing Crypts. She is a member of The Free Prison. ‘Ragna’ Kikrostegdoth likes Granite, Platinum, Aquamarine, ivory, quivers, tables, coins and rainbow trout for their coloration. She absolutely detests toads. She is quick to anger. She lives life at a leisurely pace. She does not have a great aesthetic sensitivity. She is highly adventurous and loves fresh experiences. She regards intellectual exercises as a waste of energy. She is candid and sincere in dealings with others. She doesn’t like to compromise with others. She finds rules confining. She needs alcohol to get through the working day. She does not mind being outdoors, at least for a time.	
FPS: 1002	‘Yngwie’ ðnulrimtar, “‘Yngwie’ Mirrorcastles”, Metalcrafter
‘Yngwie’ ðnulrimtar has been quite content lately. She admired a fine Cage lately. She is a faithful worshipper of Nish the East Wanderer of Wheels. She is a citizen of The Searing Crypts. She is a member of The Free Prison. ‘Yngwie’ ðnulrimtar likes Shale, Sterling silver, Chrysocolla and cougar leather. When possible, she prefers to consume cat. She absolutely detests fire snakes. She is often nervous. She is self-conscious. She isn’t given to flights of fancy. She is open-minded to new ideas. She is very trusting. She is modest. She does not feel effective in life. She is self-disciplined. She needs alcohol to get through the working day. She likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.	
FPS: 1000	‘Jora’ Urminbomrek, “‘Jora’ Swamwhipped”, Pirate
‘Jora’ Urminbomrek has been happy lately. She admired a fine Trade Depot lately. She is a worshipper of Zas Coppercolored the Blueness of Dye. She is a citizen of The Searing Crypts. She is a member of The Free Prison. ‘Jora’ Urminbomrek likes Garnierite, Nickel silver, Schorl and coins. She absolutely detests fire snakes. She is quick to anger. She tends to avoid crowds. She is constantly active and energetic. She is open-minded to new ideas. She takes time when making decisions. She needs alcohol to get through the working day.	

Quite a lot of male dwarf requests went female, I'm afraid. Strongly female immigration wave. Opted to turn Ragnar to Ragna to give him/her the Weaponsmith that came with the wave (since it was established she forged her own weapon).

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Riversand** on **May 13, 2009, 01:06:36 pm**

I would like to take a dwarf, female, name Karana, any proffession right now is fine, but maybe a marksdwarf that also works with bones for both crossbows and bolts.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **May 13, 2009, 04:36:42 pm**

Alright! This is great. Ragna's personality looks like that of someone who would voluntarily live in exile. "Doesnt compromise" fits in well with the story too. Great job!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Rysith** on **May 13, 2009, 06:09:55 pm**

Thanks for the dwarf! The personality seems to fit quite well, too.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **May 13, 2009, 06:30:14 pm**

im a chick? bummer. though the personality seems to match pretty good.

also, i wanted a mechanic :P not furnace operator

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Kanute** on **May 13, 2009, 07:02:19 pm**

Metalcrafter > metalsmith, and more in line with what I had written about her, so that's a good change.

That Yngwie "...does not feel effective in life" works well with her background, as well.

Looking forward for more!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 13, 2009, 10:35:17 pm**

No mechanics in this immigration wave, sorry. I can train her up into a mechanic, but there's more chance of immediate story participation that way.

Be a day or so before the next update, likely. Got a spot of a cold atm. Also, thank you all very much for the praise! Compliments and criticisms are always welcome; one keeps me going and the other makes me a better writer.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **[deleted]** on **May 13, 2009, 10:40:53 pm**

Quote from: Iituem on May 13, 2009, 10:35:17 pm

No mechanics in this immigration wave, sorry. I can train her up into a mechanic, but there's more chance of immediate story participation that way.

Be a day or so before the next update, likely. Got a spot of a cold atm. Also, thank you all very much for the praise! Compliments and criticisms are always welcome; one keeps me going and the other makes me a better writer.

Hope you get better soon, then. Definitely looking forward to the next update, as well! Keep up the good work.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **May 13, 2009, 11:17:31 pm**

aw man, i feel your pain my friend. i was sick myself not to long ago. colds suck!

and yea, i understand that sometimes the right jobs dont arrive for community forts. was just bein sure you remembered ;D

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 14, 2009, 06:10:08 am**

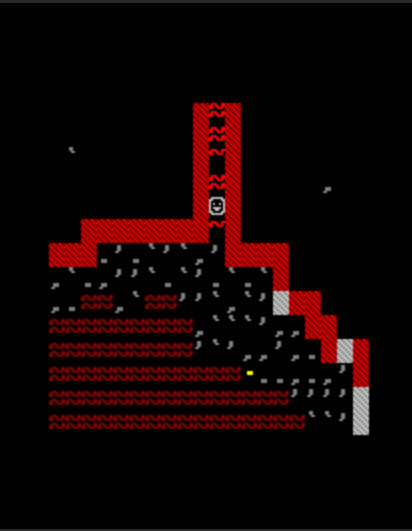
*Ragna's Log*  
20th Slate, 352

As a token of good faith, the dwarves here have agreed to my request to set up a training field across the river. With the increased size of this camp and the Queen's current policies, there is a risk of attack from soldiers, deserters or more traditional opponents alike. For now, no more than myself and my two aides need be trained in this way. The slaughterdwarf, Urgash, has offered to make us some armour and leather bucklers for sparring work.

They are expanding the beerhall as well, moving the current bunks to a rear extension and providing more tables in the current space.

24th Slate, 352

Ascubis informs me that whilst testing how deep the sand at the base of the western mesa was, the mining team dug straight into a cavern full of magma. I have asked him to report this to the camp leader, Emerin. For so long as we are here, it will be necessary to remind the others that I am not in charge.



**Vignette: Grottomountains**  
*3rd-14th Felsite, 352*

Yngwie and Ousire knelt down by the spiretop shrine, dropping their small *ular* into the stone bowl and folding their hands in prayer. Ousire poured a little oil onto them from a mug and lit the *ular* with the shrine's tinderbox. The tiny wooden statues burned with flickering pale flames in the wind. A couple of other dwarves were already before the kaolinite idol that had become a common place for meditation amongst dwarves on their breaks, as even those that did not especially revere Nakas still appreciated a dedicated site for prayer. One of the dwarves already present, a young female, appeared to be very deeply in prayer; so deeply in fact that her friend was gently nudging her to wake her up. Yngwie looked over at the entranced dwarf, recognising her.

"Karana?" she asked. The dwarf did not appear to hear her, so she closed her eyes and returned to her prayer. A few moments later, she heard movement beside her and looked over. Karana had opened her eyes and now stared intently at the statue. She stood up and looked over the other three dwarves.

"Come," she said in a strangely authoritative voice. "There is a work to be done." With that she turned and strode towards the encampment, pale and dusty clothes flapping in the mountainside winds. Yngwie stood up to follow, dragging Ousire with her. They reached the small stone building at the far edge of the encampment when Karana turned to them.

"What is this place to be?" she asked.

"Well, I think they're turning it into a granary," volunteered Yngwie. "There's this chamber being flooded downstairs for use as a farm and-"

"Good," said Karana, cutting her off. "This shall be a house of Nakas. She shall reside in this place, as She has in many others. Let us celebrate." Karana strode in the direction of the workshops without a further word. Ousire glanced at Yngwie and shrugged. They headed towards the complex of workshops (filled with dwarves erecting new walls and roofs), where Karana had seized a hunk of brown jasper the size of a table and dragged it onto the gemworkers' bench. The dwarf had produced tools and already begun chiselling into the jasper, reciting mantras to Nakas as she did so. The dwarves watched her work for a few minutes before it became apparent that she was not about to cease and so returned to their duties.

Over the next five days, Karana worked day and night with neither food nor water, sustained it seemed by pure fervour. Whilst initially ignored, dwarves would come to watch her work with curiosity, listening to her recitals of Nakasian verse and hymn. By the fourth day, some had already begun to gather around her during their breaks or in the evening, listening to the Nakasian stories and joining in the



hymns. At mid-day on the fifth day dwarves at work were astounded to see Karana leave the workshop and head for the granary-to-be, hefting the piece she had been working on and now completed. Soon a crowd had gathered in the cramped space of the building and watched with mixed interest, bewilderment and awe as Karana installed the artefact she had produced over the stairwell to the lower level.

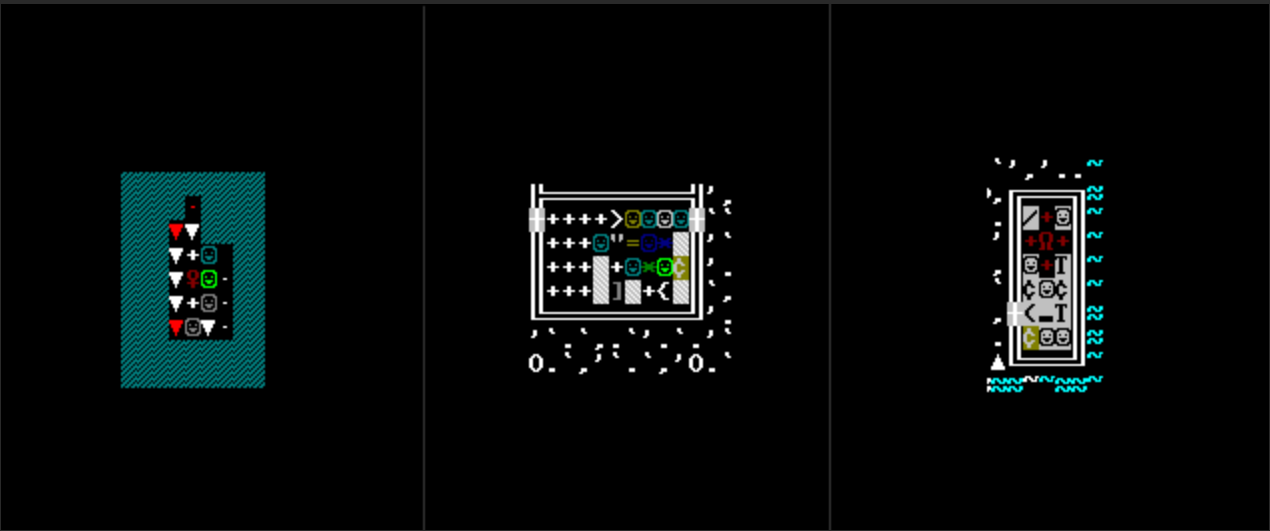
Carved from a single block of brown jasper, the hatch covering had been buffed to a brilliant shine, with lines of scripture engraved around the sides and upon the handle. At its centre was a depiction in cameo of the artefact itself (including scripture) at a perfect ratio of 1:1.618, itself possessing an intaglio depiction of the hatch cover at the same ratio, which possessed another such depiction in cameo, continuing on until the detail on the smallest hatch became too small to make out with the naked eye.

"As I prayed," explained Karana to the marvelling crowd, "I saw a vision of the Seared Crypt, of our country. I saw the fear that gripped the land, the despair and chaos that shook it. Then I was taken from the country to the citadel, from the citadel to an outpost, from an outpost to a lone grotto in the hills and thence to a family, and in all these places I saw this despair reflected. Yet at the last I saw a seed of joy, of revelry, in the birth of a newborn child. I watched as the joy from this moment spread to that family, then echoed as a light to the whole grotto, carried back to the outpost, the citadels and at last to the whole of dwarfkind. There, my friends, I learned the truth; it is not the misfortune of the world that oppresses us, but our own individual joys that liberate it.

"This work I dedicate to Nakas, from whom all revelry springs, and to those grotto mountains, to those places of the individual from which the seed of joy flourishes. Let it remind us that the greater picture is but an echo of the individual within. For many of us these past months have been ones of mourning and pain, of loss and difficulty. We have suffered, we have been driven forth from our homes and cast out. Yet I say to you that here, in this place, we shall find new life and new purpose. Here we shall find the seed of joy in our hearts and sing out with revelry to the world! Sing with me, then! Sing with me of joy!"

Karana broke out into song then, a rapturous hymn to Nakas, and caught up in the moment the dwarves there joined her in the familiar song. They sang it to its end and Karana led them in prayer before blessing them all that they might go forth with revelry in their hearts.

Six days on from the installation of the hatch (which had been named Grottomountains in dedication to the vision), the idol had been moved from the spire summit to the newly consecrated shrine where the artefact was installed. Fath had been busy engraving the floors of the shrine, which now bore depictions of tales of legend, the building of their encampment, the creation of the hatch cover and two depictions of Grottomountains itself (though the recursive depictions stopped after three iterations). That evening, Karana led the dwarves in service once again.



Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 14, 2009, 06:11:12 am**

**Olonkulet Appendix Notes - Ular**

*Ular* (sing. *ula*) are tiny statues, about half the size of an adult thumb, that serve multiple religious purposes in dwarven culture. The most common *ular* are wooden depictions of dwarves or livestock that are ritualistically burned before altars. In the early settlement of Olonkulet, these were carved from the rough desert weeds that otherwise served only for kindling.

Depending on the statue used, this rite can serve a variety of purposes. Burnt offerings depicting animals or possessions are sometimes made to dedicate such creatures to the gods or in exchange for favours from the divine. Depictions of ancestors are burned as a way of communicating with the dead; prayers are spoken as the effigy is burned and the smoke carries the prayers to the gods, who convey them to the dead. It is customary to *also* make a burnt offering to the god in question when doing this to avoid offending them. Finally, effigies of recently slain foes are sometimes burnt in this way as a dedication to war gods such as Gigin of the souls of the defeated.

The other form of *ula* is carved from stone, baked from clay or cast from metal or glass. The first use for these *ular* is as grave goods for the departed. Depictions of livestock, possessions or valuables are placed with the body in the grave or tomb to help out the deceased in the afterlife. Amongst warriors, effigies of those they had slain are sealed with them to act as servants in the next world. The second use is as a purgative. A glass, bone or clay *ula* is sometimes prepared for those suffering illness, depicting whatever manner of demon is associated with the illness in question. Various wooden *ular* are burnt as offerings to the gods whilst prayers are said over the sickbed of the patient and the sickness is supposedly transferred into the effigy. Once the patient has been recovered, the effigy *ula* is either smashed with a consecrated hammer or sealed away so that the demon can do no more harm.

The final use of this form of *ula* is rather darker; it can be used as a poppet would to bring misfortune upon another dwarf. Preparing a clay, bone or glass depiction of another dwarf, offerings can be made to the appropriate powers and the *ula* shattered to bring misfortune upon the intended target. A stone *ula* is believed to bring greater misfortune or injury, whilst a metal *ula* will supposedly bring death or great tragedy.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 14, 2009, 09:44:53 am**

*Emerin's Log*  
11th Haematite, 352

One of the workers on the upper beerhall caught a glimpse of a passing human caravan, some distance away in the desert. A dwarf has been sent with a few days' food and water to divert them here for trade.

**Vignette: Hatchcover Prophecy**  
17th Haematite, 352

A carnival atmosphere filled the marketplace as Emerin, decked out in her green pipemoss dress and a foxfur coat, walked with the human trader through the caravan's wares. The trader Ibon Nedjirdo, herself in a mauve boll cotton dress and cloak, had explained her status as a representative of one of the trading guilds of the Folded Empire and her journey west to the coast, showing Emerin the many wares they brought for sale there. Ibon had already apologised that they could not take them on the journey, for their stated destination meant a five-week journey through the desert and they could not extend their supplies so far for so many.

"Now I understand you had a particular interest in wood," said Ibon in her thick desert accent, gesturing to a dour-looking camel laden with twelve heavy logs of ash, oak and saguaro. "We understand how difficult this can be to obtain in your location."

"Very," agreed Emerin. "We will happily take all you have, as we are building a wagon to leave the desert. Happily, we may have enough with what you can provide us."

"Very good. As for the matter of provision, I wonder if you can perhaps show me a sample of what you have to trade?" The trader grinned, baring her yellowed teeth.

Emerin smiled back politely and reached into her pocket. She had been expecting this and come prepared. She unrolled the piece of cloth to reveal a small marmot-bone amulet. The trader's grin became a beam as she inspected the gem-work; a masterfully worked ring of dark green bloodstone, shot through with rich bloody colouration, surrounded a superior cameo depiction in fire agate of the legendary murder of the dwarven hero Led Ruleconstruct by his childhood companion Bosa, who had been abducted and turned to the side of the goblins as a young dwarf. Danielle had appraised its worth as nearly two hundred and fifty firecaps.

Grinning widely, the trader walked Emerin through the stalls at a leisurely pace, singing the praises of the rich metals and fine wares they possessed. Emerin bargained for the supplies of alcohol and for what fruit and meat the trader had brought, as well as several bins of leather from the eastern plains. Ibon offered her a bowl of fruit to inspect. She picked one up, peering at it curiously.

"What is this?" she asked, looking over the palm-sized, thick-skinned fruit.

"That is a hamfist," explained Ibon. "We have some barrels of hamfist juice for sale as well."

"And that one?" Emerin pointed at something that looked like a fleshy onion.

"A peelifruit. We have fermented snap of that, as well."

Emerin bought the fruits, as well as several bags of flour and even a few jars of spice. She made a point of buying the iron shields presented to her. As they passed the small menagerie of domestic animals on one of the wagons she began to wave her offers away, but stopped dead at seeing one of the cages.

"Excuse me," she asked. "Where did you get that cage from?"

"What, that one? It was a donkey cage from a dwarf grotto, picked it up last year. We sold the donkey a few weeks ago, but they didn't want the cage. Ah, I see you are admiring the image sewn into the padding, yes? The cage was originally for holding prisoners, though I daresay the donkey did not complain." The human chuckled at her own joke as Emerin stared blankly at the design in the bedding.

"You say you picked this up last year?"

"Yes, around late summer. If you like, it is yours for oh, let me see..." The human began to calculate, but Emerin absently handed her a bejewelled ivory brooch and she smiled even more widely. "It is yours, of course."

"Of course," Emerin murmured. There in the bedding, depicted nearly a year before in rough agave cloth, was Grottomountains, replete with recursive imagery.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **May 14, 2009, 01:04:43 pm**

yay i am finally in the story :P wow how ironic that the same imagry was found. i am guessing that was her cage? :P

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Remalle** on **May 14, 2009, 01:14:52 pm**

Quote from: scuba on May 14, 2009, 01:04:43 pm  
wow how ironic that the same imagry was found.

That's not ironic >:(

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Riversand** on **May 14, 2009, 03:04:50 pm**

and i would like one to be trained up, basically she wanted to be a mechanic, but never got the chance, or something to the effect of that.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **May 14, 2009, 03:08:19 pm**

i know ;) :P

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Enzo** on **May 14, 2009, 05:26:23 pm**

The plot thickens! What is Karana hiding? Is *Grottomountains* secretly a portal to another world? Is the donkey cage *from the future*? Is Broose secretly an elf with dwarfism? *Who is the father of Ragnas baby*? FIND OUT NEXT WEEK same olonkulet time, same olonkulet channel!

...

I laughed pretty hard at the artifact description. It just had to be a recursive hatchcover, didn't it? :P I think about a quarter of my artifacts are recursive hatchcovers for some reason. Keep 'em coming dude ;D

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **May 14, 2009, 05:36:22 pm**

i think its going to be a portal to a elven fortress....when we have A MASSIVE ARMY MWUHAHAHAHAHAHH ok im done :)

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **May 14, 2009, 06:15:07 pm**

I think Emerin might want to... *ahem*, appropriate that jasper hatch cover. Once a jewel thief, always a jewel thief.

In general, I'm surprised at how little our dwarves' criminal tendencies have carried over into the fortress itself. I expected more conflict. Like Emerin, being a non violent thief, might be a little uncomfortable dealing with Urgash, a brutal murderer. And how Frey, being the apparent orchestrator of the escape from the mountainhomes, might be somewhat angry that Emerin decided to put herself in charge.

It's rather orderly for a temporary colony of prisoners, isn't it?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **May 14, 2009, 09:48:05 pm**

Quote from: Jim Groovester on May 14, 2009, 06:15:07 pm

It's rather orderly for a temporary colony of prisoners, isn't it?

were all out here in the desert. all for one, one for all. we kill someone, thats one less person who could be helping keeping the group alive ;D

anyway, i love when you get recursive artifacts XD always makes me wonder exatly how they were able to get such detail

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 14, 2009, 10:48:33 pm**

Quote from: Jim Groovester on May 14, 2009, 06:15:07 pm

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It's rather orderly for a temporary colony of prisoners, isn't it?

You make a very good point. I'll work on characterisation a bit more through the next few updates. These will be largely story, as not a great deal noteworthy happens throughout 352.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 15, 2009, 12:01:18 am**

*Emerin's Log*  
20th Haematite, 352

A fight broke out in the Beerhall today. Another fight, this time between Loksvig and the smelter/mechanic Ousire. By the time I got back from the western shaft to deal with it, Broose was already restraining Loksvig and Ousire's friend Yngwie had managed to pull her away. Apparently the thing started with an off-handed comment by Ousire about me (brilliant), which my dear love responded to with a jibe about her mother's beard. Things very nearly broke into a riot when that bloody pirate Jora got onto the scene and tried to challenge Loksvig to a duel.

Jora. That dwarf is responsible for half the fights in my book (I cannot believe I have a book for this sort of thing! We're trying to escape a bloody desert, why do I have to use bloody book-keeping just to keep things in order?!). She's quick-tempered and has a head full of romantic ideas about living the life of a bloody bandit. I asked Frey to investigate her for me (still unnerves me he knows how to do that), comes back with a colourful history of robbing a bunch of human towns and fleeing on horseback or by ship. Doesn't the girl know how to pull off a proper heist? You *walk* out of the bank, waving and smiling at the man you just robbed whilst he considers you his best customer, you don't run!

Karana is gaining a lot of influence amongst the Nakasians. Urgash practically worships the ground she works on, which is pretty disturbing when you consider it's Urgash doing the worshipping. You'd think Danielle would take issue with it, but as far as I can tell she either doesn't know or doesn't care. I should be worried about this sort of thing, but Frey (who seems to be giving me a lot more advice on these things now that the mines have reopened and we're working together again) assures me the girl has no real designs on power.

Designs on power! As if I *want* this job! I've actually tried to pass it over to Broose and Frey a few times, as one has proven himself so steadfast and the other seems inevitably at ease and with a plan or suggestion at hand. Both of them rebuffed me with the same horrible truth; I've the gift of the gab. Politics, especially now that we have twenty-five people here, is all about handling people. Who better to do it than a bloody con artist? By Deler's midnight beard, I just want to get out of this place with a few good gemstones and go somewhere I can get a warm bath and a decent drink.

I'm going to have to call a meeting.

24th Haematite, 352

Meeting went poorly. Loksvig largely spent it making witticisms until Broose picked him up by the shirt and held him in the air for half a minute. That was about three-quarters of the way through. Fath was too busy trying to tell us about his latest device to really listen for long, and I've never exactly gotten the feeling that he cares about people too much either. Urgash as usual was the pinnacle of helpfulness and the voice of reason, right up until he casually suggested murdering them all so he could have some fresh materials to work with. The lunatic then started going into a plan, calm-as-you-please, to capture them and stick them in a pit and slaughter them individually so that the abbatoir wouldn't get clogged up! Why the hell did we bring this madman with us?

Decision was eventually reached. Something has to be done about the fights, even if it means it's going to be a lot harder to half-inch jewellery from the bins now. Not that it was easy to begin with - Danielle accounts like a hawk. I've had to use the marketplace to 'wash' quite a few trinkets, since she keeps track of everything from raw materials upwards. The girl even asks for status reports, with values in firecap! Anyhow, we'll need to make an appointment. Fath assures me the offices will be finished in four days' time, so we'll work on it then.

28th Haematite, 352

Emerin, Danielle and Broose led Ragna and her fellow soldiers, Jora and Datan, up the steps of the expanded beerhall, entering the doorway on the first floor. Within were three offices, tiled with polished chalk on floor and wall alike. The light filtering through the thin windows made the spartan rooms practically glimmer.

"As you've already seen," Danielle explained, "Fath's design has expanded the rear bunkrooms to cope with general sleeping requirements, which we admit is a temporary measure but should at least keep everyone's heads dry. Up here, we have the administration centre."

"Administration centre!" grunted Broose. "We've been here so bloody long we actually need a bloody government. I don't know whether to laugh or cry."

"If I didn't laugh," muttered Emerin, "I'd have hanged myself already. Danielle and I are struggling with too much paperwork to manage it without offices to keep it all. So there's a main office here, as well as offices for the accounts and for the sherriff."

"We have a sherriff now?" piped up Jora from behind Ragna. She wrinkled her nose with displeasure.

"We've no choice," sighed Emerin. "Nobody will like it because half of us are criminals. Which is the problem. There've been two fights this week over people half-inching other people's rations, and nearly twenty over the last three months for a variety of little disputes; card games gone wrong, whose seat in the beerhall is whose, pulling of beards and such. It's all trivial, but sooner or later someone will steal something important or say something wrong and we'll have a bloody mess on our hands."

"So who are you putting in charge?"asked Ragna, looking to Broose expectantly.

"You."

"What?" exclaimed Ragna. "You can't make me Sherriff, I'm already in charge of the militia!"

"Believe me, we considered that," said Emerin. "The simple fact is that your migrants and the seven of us haven't really got to know each other that well yet, and they all seem to trust you. If we put Broose here in charge, that's going to look like a government of 'three of them and none of us' to the dwarves out there. I may be a criminal, but I know people and I know that's a recipe for disaster. When people are getting pulled apart so they don't kill each other over a mug of ale, I'd much rather they think 'old Captain Ragna held me back, stopped us from doing something silly', rather than 'that bastard Broose beat me up, those guys are trying to keep us down'."

"You can't have the military and the guard force the same," said Ragna. "If the guys defending the people are the same guys allowed to use lethal force at their own discretion, it's a dictatorship, not a community. Guards can watch themselves, but if not the guards then who will be watching the soldiers?"

"Me," rumbled Broose. He patted the axe at his belt gently.

"Broose here will be your sergeant, Captain," explained Danielle. "He can carry out military orders from you whilst you can still serve as a guard, and because that chain of command exists he can break it if you make an order that is either treasonous or-"

"-bloody stupid," finished Broose. "The guard watches the government, the government watches the soldiers, and I watch you. That way everyone stays civil."

"That's the offer," said Emerin. "We'd much rather you take it than leave it, but it's your choice either way."

"What about Karana?" asked Ragna. "She's certainly popular enough."

"No military experience," said Emerin, "and frankly I don't want to consider the ramifications of putting a 'holy dwarf' in charge of law enforcement. Do you want the job?"

"No," grumbled Ragna, "but I'll take it anyway. You make a good sell, Emerin."

Emerin nodded and led her and the other dwarves into one of the rear offices, explaining the various minutae of Ragna's new post.

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Journal entries are so much easier and quicker to write than vignettes. I don't have to come up with dialogue. --

You may also have noticed I'm not doing a graphic with every single vignette now. Sometimes there just isn't that much to show. I'll add them in when they're appropriate.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **May 15, 2009, 12:24:05 am**

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Back in a position of military command again, eh? Ragna *might* be able to fall back into old military routines easily, but she still will refuse any stupid beating orders, such as beating a planter for a failure to make bismuth items, something Broose seems to not have picked up on yet. :) She's extremely fair, and here loyalty to those higher than her is only matched by her desire to not see those under her hurt unnecessarily.

So the basic leaders are (as i see it)

Emerin: leader  
broose/ frey: second in commands  
Ragna: militia leader, sheriff  
Karana: religious leader

That about right?

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Broose** on **May 15, 2009, 12:41:50 am**

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So is Broose getting military training yet?

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 15, 2009, 02:48:57 am**

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Unfortunately, Broose only managed to get trained up to competency in armour/shield use & wrestling/axedwarfship before he got a neck injury and could no longer spar. When we get a decent stock of bone bolts built up, I'll put him on marksdwarf duty to make him of further use.

Frey & Emerin are master miners at this point, with Ascubis at Expert+, so the whole mining crew is pretty experienced now. Karana is really contributing to trading ability, as her gemsetting skill means nearly always exceptional/masterwork gemwork. Fath and Loksvig are feeling a bit left out on the mechanical side of things (the high-level mechanics of Olonkulet will be a while before they set in, I'm afraid), though Fath is a proficient engraver at this point from smoothing all the hamlet floors.

Jora and Datan are both heroes now (in wrestling), and Ragna's actually a champion, having hit legendary wrestling. Vignette about that coming up soonish. I tried to cut them off and have them switch to sword practice at Professional/Accomplished to stop this happening (Ragna was also our main weaponsmith, but I'll have to designate a new one now), but they picked up enough wrestling on the side to keep advancing through to hero level.

Urgash is a pretty experienced cook, roasting ridiculous amounts of food to get prepared food out of the barrels and into the stockpiles, freeing the barrels up for the much-needed liquor. He's also keeping up on the bonecrafting side of things, but I designated a new leatherworker so he wasn't always so strained (issues with rotting butchered items were arising). There are now about 18 puppies in storage, waiting to grow old so they can be slaughtered.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 15, 2009, 05:53:15 am**

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**Vignette: Difference**  
*12th Malachite, 352*

Danielle peered at the strange stone contraption set on her desk. It appeared to be a squat chalk box, half the size of her filing chest, with a series of stone tiles along the bottom and a row of ten cylinders across the top. The cylinders were set end-to-end into the device, bearing digits engraved into them. All the cylinders currently had '0' facing the viewer. The stone tiles had the digits '0' through '9' scribed on them and a small variety of mathematical signs. They looked to be depressable. There was a lever on one side.



"And you call this what?" Danielle asked Fath, who was fidgeting on the other side of the desk.

"I call it me new engine for working out the difference 'tween numbers, lassie," exclaimed Fath proudly.

"Which in dwarven means?"

"It does sums! Addition, subtraction, it even does division and multiplication with logarithms! Here, look. Yon types in yon number yon starts wi', then't 'addition' sign, then't next number." Fath quickly typed numbers into the engine, causing the little cylinders to flick around to the correct places, displaying the number on the rack of cylinders. When he pressed the addition sign, the cylinders all flicked back to zero.

"Hey!" said Danielle. "How is it going to add the number if it's gone like that?"

"Ah well, it *remembers* them, lassie. Tha's the beauty of it. Then y' type in the nex' number an' it gi's y' y' answer." Fath's accent thickened to the point of syrup as he became more involved, giving Danielle some difficulty actually understanding what the highmountain dwarf was saying. She did watch as Fath pulled the lever on the side and the cylinders spun around to the correct answer to the sum.

"So it's an abacus," said Danielle carefully, "that doesn't require you to actually think?"

"Well, aye, I guess yon could put i' like that. The machine does the thinkin' for yon."

"Except that I can work out a sum in my head faster than it takes me to type all of that in by hand."

"Well, aye," admitted Fath, "bu' not all dwarves can do that. If you're not so good at sums, this could be very useful. I could make it smaller if I had metal to make the gears wi', though. Like brass," he added hopefully.

"I've explained this before, Fath, we can't get any forging done until the western shaft is complete. Thank you for showing this device to me, though. It's not really a thinking engine as such though, is it?"

"No?" Fath frowned. Danielle shook her head.

"Well, it doesn't learn, it doesn't perceive the world around it. It just grinds numbers. If you want to make an engine that thinks, maybe you should start by making one that thinks for itself, rather than for us?" Fath pondered that.

"Aye, lass, you may be onto something there." He picked up the device and waddled out of the room with it, Danielle watching him leave. As the door closed, she glanced at the long list of numbers on the day book in front of her and calmly jotted numbers down at speed along the right hand side, popping a firecap from the nearby fingerbowl into her mouth as she worked through the sums.

**Vignette: War Stories - The Spider's Left Hand**  
*17th Galena, 352*

Broose leant against the barracks wall with a flask of gin, watching the fight in progress. Unlike the other fighters, Broose was excused from sparring by an old war injury to the neck, but he had enough competence as an axedwarf and wrestler to get by, so nobody gave him lip about it. Datan also had taken a seat on the floor near Broose, awaiting his turn.

Ragna stood calmly at one end of the barracks, sword sheathed and hands pressed together before her whilst Jora saluted with her sword, waved it in a dramatic flourish and charged with a great bellow. The swordsdwarf rushed towards her teacher at speed, raising her sword for a fell swoop - and finding it gone from her hands and clattering across the room. A split second later a rain of blows came down on her from behind and she ducked and rolled, dodging the flurry of strokes from the Captain, who was moving with impossible agility. In less than ten seconds it was over, Jora pressed on her back with the Captain's weight on her. Ragna casually drew her short sword and rested it on Jora's neck.

"Yield," she commanded. Jora tapped feebly on the ground.

Later that evening, over drinks at the Beerhall, Datan posed the question of where Ragna had learned to move so quickly.

"I learned from the Old Elven Masters," answered Ragna, to the laughter of Jora and Datan. Broose frowned instead.

"I do not doubt your word, but I find it worrying that you were so close to the Elves," he said. "The Masters do not train just anyone."

"What?" said Jora. "I thought she was joking. You're telling me there is actually such a thing as an Old Elven Master?"

"I don't believe it," chuckled Datan. "The captain and the sergeant are having us on, Jora. We all know the myths; ancient elven druids from the beginning of time that possess ultimate skill in combat!"

"They aren't druids, by definition," said Ragna. "The myths get that one mixed up. The druids don't fight. That's not their role."

"So what are they?" asked Jora.

"Old hands," said Broose. "Soldiers that got so good at staying alive they never died. They guard the hearts of forests, and they can kill armies if roused to. I've seen it happen. I want to know how you managed it, Captain."

"I'm an old dwarf," sighed the Captain, "and my memory is not what it was-"

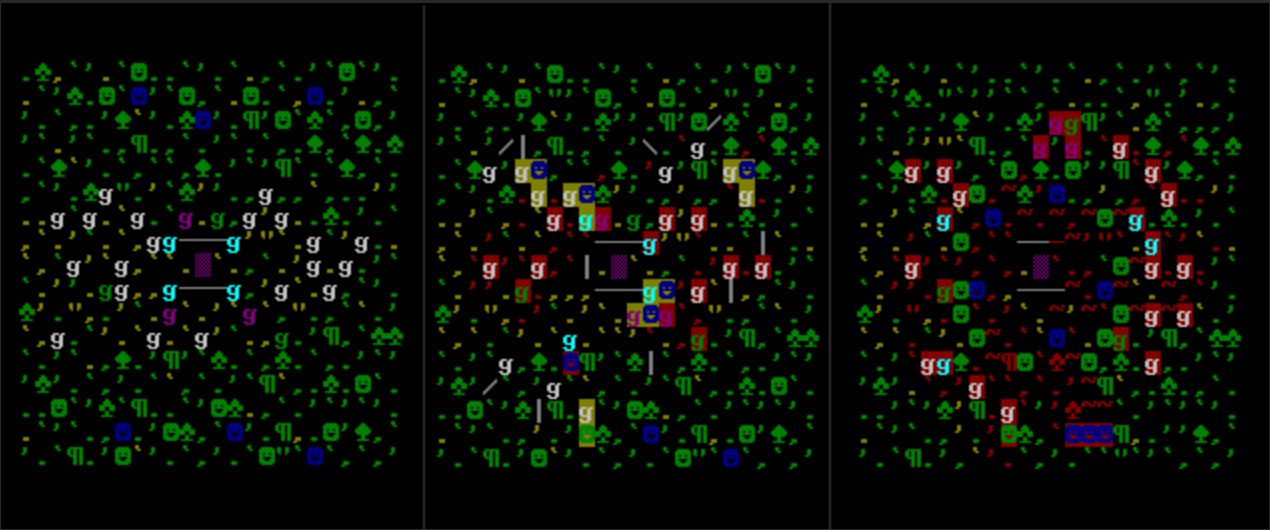
"Round of bourbon for the Captain," shouted Jora to the dwarf manning the liquor kegs. She leant back and grinned smugly as the tankard was brought over, passing the dwarf a couple of the firecaps that were in so great a surplus they were being used as currency.

"Nothing jogs the memory like booze," chuckled Ragna. "Very well. It was many years ago..."

There was a war on. There was always a war on, but in that day it was with the goblins and not the elves. They had been set against the standards of the Granite Spider, led personally by their demon master Slakga Burybad, who was known as the Branded Oblivion. Ragna's detachment had been sent out specially to intercept a troop of goblins transporting one of their military's higher ups; a priest-general supposedly at Slakga's left hand. Their orders were to capture the goblin commander and return him alive for interrogation, or else to kill him if no other option presented itself. They stalked through the forests of the Elven nation The Fin of Saints, with whom a tenuous peace existed between both dwarves and goblins. In the depths of the neutral forest, they spied their quarry.

The parade of goblin soldiers marched through the forest, stamping the grass flat as they went. A relatively small band, about twenty unarmed slave shock troops, backed up by three hammerers and three marksgoblins. Their prize, a sedan coach covered with purple velvet drapes, was borne aloft on steel poles by four goblins who were supremely well-dressed by comparison to their fellows, sporting polished steel armour and fine longwords at their belts. The dwarves silently moved into position ahead of the retinue, their footsteps masked by the layer of soft earth and leaves in the forest. As the goblins marched into position, Commander Rimblazes shouted the order and the marksdwarves let loose their bolts. Nearly half the entourage went down with the first volley, a lucky bolt even dropping one of the swordmasters holding up the sedan. With a battlecry, the axedwarves charged into battle and the goblins strode to meet them. In the first ten seconds blades clashed, bolts flew and a much younger lieutenant Ragna drove her axe through the chest of the last remaining marksgoblin. In another ten seconds the goblins were halved again, though the swordmasters had struck down three dwarves in the fight, and ten seconds after that the last swordmaster was riddled through with bolts. The sedan sat abandoned in the

middle of the glade.



The marksdwarves quickly dragged the bodies away from the sedan as the axedwarves set up a containment ring around it. "Show yourself!" called out the commander. "We have you surrounded, give up without a fight and you will be taken prisoner!"

There was a rustling of the sedan's drapes and the axedwarves tensed themselves for a possible fight. The marksdwarves cocked their bows. To their great surprise, what stepped forth from the sedan was not some battle-ready goblin champion, nor a richly-robed dark priest, but a wizened and rather frail-looking old human in faded yellow lintgrass robes and a long grey beard. A pair of round spectacles perched on his hook-like nose gave him all the appearance of a rather surprised owl. He smiled peaceably at the confused dwarves. Commander Rimblazes, for want of imagination, went with the mission he had been given.

"Human," he called out, "we do not mean to kill you. Surrender any weapons you possess."

"I have only my walking staff," replied the old human, sheepishly, reaching into the sedan and producing a rather gnarled oak staff. He leant on it heavily. "You would deprive me of this, when you wish me to walk so far with you?" Rimblazes considered this for a moment, then nodded.

"Keep it then, old man. We were sent here to capture a goblin leader, the left hand of the Branded Oblivion. You will tell us where he is."

"I will?" replied the old man with a puzzled expression. "Well, if you say so, but I should say that I already have."

"What nonsense is this? Tell us where he is, human! We do not wish to harm you, but if you do not comply with our demands, we shall be forced to."

"All I am saying is that if you do not believe your own eyes, why should you believe what I can say?" Rimblazes looked first bewildered, then incredulous.

"You mean to say that *you* are the goblin leader we seek?"

"Well, as you say. Here I am, here you were told to go, and it does appear that I am leading some goblins. So what do you suppose?" Rimblazes harrumphed loudly at that; he was no dwarf for playing games.

"Then you will come with us," he snapped shortly. "You are our prisoner and will be treated fairly, unless you provide resistance."

"Ah," smiled the old human. "Yes, I can see how that might become a problem. You see, I'm very fond of my freedom and I really must insist you change your mind on this."

"Not going to happen, old man."

"Very well," sighed the human, planting his staff in the ground and raising his hands. "You can't say I didn't try, can you?"

"No, I can't," grunted Rimblazes. "Keep your hands there, and one of my dwarves will bind them. Since you've been so co-operative, we'll even bind them *in front* so you can eat your dinner like a civilised being, rather than the trough we had planned for the goblin."

"I am ever so grateful," said the human with another peaceful smile. "Tell me, where will you be taking me?"

"Sir?" called Ragna from behind the captain, who waved her off.

"Not now, lieutenant. Also, our destination is none of your business, prisoner."

"Oh, come now," said the human. "I have been very compliant. Who will it hurt, hm?"

"Sir, I-"

"Later, lieutenant!" snapped the captain. "Bind his hands, since you're so eager. As for where we're taking you, we'll be heading north to rejoin with the army, where you'll be interrogated by our generals. I shall tell you no more than that."

"Thank you for that courtesy at least," replied the old man.

"Sir!" shouted Ragna.

"What in Gigin's name is it, lieutenant?" barked Rimblazes, spinning around to face her.

"Look at his feet, sir!"

Everyone's eyes turned to the ground around the old man. In a near perfect circle, emanating outward from the point of the staff embedded into the ground, the blood-soaked grass was drying up and crumbling to ash. The wizard smiled cheerfully and raised two fingers and a thumb. Placing the index finger firmly on the thumb, he gave a cheerful exclamation.

"I'd like to thank you in advance for the entertainment, captain. I'm afraid I won't get the chance afterwards."

The old man snapped his fingers and Captain Rimblazes exploded in a blast of fire, gore and bone. From that moment on, chaos reigned and fire rained. Trees twisted and blackened as the human-looking entity brought his arm in an arc, wreathing dwarves in sheets of potent flame. Ragna did the only thing she could when faced with such a horror; she ran. She ran as hard and fast as she could as behind her the shrieks and screams of her companions echoed through the forest. So energised by terror was she that she ran for nearly a mile before she realised that the flame had touched her too, searing her back with horrific burns. She staggered forward, falling into the dirt and into darkness.

She awoke six days later in a soft, gossamer hammock, her wounds treated and armour and weaponry stripped from her. The first thing she saw was the ring of elven faces staring down at her.





"And then what?" prompted Jora excitedly. A small crowd had gathered around the table now to listen to Ragna's old war story. The captain laughed and leant back with her mug, tapping her nose knowingly.

"That, young scoundrel, is a tale for another time and another keg of bourbon." There were moans from the audience, but the atmosphere remained friendly and most of the listeners moved away to their various businesses. Datan stared at the captain, eyes narrowed.

"I don't believe you," he declared. "Humans that shoot fire? Rescued by elves? Don't take this as an insult to your honour, captain, it's been a great story, but that's a little too far-fetched."

Ragna drained the rest of her bourbon slowly, then stood up. Datan flinched as she reached for her scabbard, then relaxed as she unbuckled it from her belt. Turning around, she lifted the back of her shirt.

"Do you believe me now?" she asked.

Datan could say nothing. Not an inch of skin remained untouched upon her back, scarred as it was from ancient burns.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **May 15, 2009, 10:29:45 am**

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Ooh, wizardry of the magical and technical kinds.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Keita** on **May 15, 2009, 04:11:42 pm**

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wow, what can I say?

I am awe struck by your storytelling, you have a talent no doubt about that.

can I request a dwarf?

preferably male but I don't mind female  
Khain if male Hane if female  
primeraly a marksdwarf/hunter but can be switched to full time military or another labour

backstory: Khain was born to a poor family in a bad part of the montain home, murder and theft common place. right from the word go he signed up with the hunters to get outside the hell hole he'd lived in and found that life outside was not as bad as discribed to him. His life was rather good intill he learnt that his nighbourhood had been purged by order of a high ranking noble, who went by the name of Olgnar, Olgnar had done this to further his carrear and to bring his corrupt ideas to fruit. This angered Khain to the point of insanity, that one dwarf would sacrifice familys to further there own selfish needs. He gathered many hunters who had also had also had now deceaced family and they took the royal guard by suprise and slayughtered many to get to Olgnar who was rendered to pieces in a mob of angry dwarfs who wanted revenge.

As Khain stood ontop of the carnage, he discoverd that he had turned into the thing he had sworn to destroy, he had killed the guard of Olgnar without a second thought, striking down sons and daughters, mothers and fathers. Destrought, Khain fled to self exile, taking a personal oath to make up for the wrong that he had done.

Personality: resirved, cautious of new people and very suspisous of every one around him. He doesn't make friends easily and can be frosty to people but the bonds he does make are strong and he does everything he can to help them when they are in trouble. He sticks to a personal code of conduct that he keeps secret, mainly trying to help people and making right the wrong, not stopping intill he is satisfied that his oath is fulfilled

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **sonerohi** on **May 15, 2009, 08:26:23 pm**

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Pepta the dwarf, please! Any profession desired, Pepta will lend a hand! You never know what skill you will need to break ot of a jail and survive in the wilds, so all of them need to be learned!

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **May 15, 2009, 09:05:30 pm**

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Oh yeah. Ragna's a badass.

At least if i hit a mood we'll get an artifact weapon.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **May 15, 2009, 09:48:28 pm**

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I'm glad you took my criticism, Iituem, but I think you may have swung too far in the direction of disorder. Fights breaking out within the booze hall with no development of tension was a bit sudden, but I think I like it better like this with all the dwarves watching each other and forcing them towards their better natures.

And now a bit about Emerin. She's rich. She's got a hidden stash of gold and jewels somewhere. Count Kogan and Baron Likot aren't the only nobles she's fleeced for their money's worth, and their mountainhome isn't the only one she robbed, just the only one she got caught at.

She didn't accumulate all her wealth by herself, however. For particularly valuable and well-guarded jewels, she would recruit help. Help that she totally screwed over, using the classic "Give me the bag of jewels, I'll see you at the meet up." trick or the "Good work; let's split up the loot tomorrow. Let's have a drink!" trick. Her unattended stash of jewels is gnawing at her mind, fearing that her spurned crews might find it. Or find her.

Being forced to be leader of a temporary refuge for prisoners is about the last thing she wants right now. Staying in one place for too long is about the last thing she wants right now.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 15, 2009, 11:18:36 pm**

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15th Limestone, 352

"No luck with that wagon, then?" asked Datan jovially as his own wagons rolled into the marketplace. Emerin stood at its centre, bearing a decidedly unamused expression for the elven dwarven liason. She drew herself up and tried to be as cordial as she could manage.

"No, there's still the tool issue. A forge is being worked on." She gestured westward, where the mesa had apparently shrunk by a number of feet since the shrine was moved.

"And I see you have in fact multiplied! Threefold, by the looks of it. You know, if you want me to stay quiet about this sort of thing, you really ought to keep your numbers down. I'd be much easier to buy off that way." Datan smirked, snapping his fingers and holding out his palm.

Emerin sighed and tossed him an ivory crown, studded with moonstones and tourmaline. The elf caught it and inspected it carefully.

"That about settle the bribe?" she asked tiredly.

"Just about, yes. On the matter of actual trade I had a feeling I might catch you here, so we have some tower cap lumber for you to buy, as well as a collection of varied spawn for your farm. We have a few weapons as well, and I can't help but notice the architectural improvements since I was last here. The wall around your camp, for one."

"We've had some slight kobold and goblin issues. Our sherriff assured us it was a necessary precaution."

"Sherriff!" Datan marvelled. "My, you dwarves practically have your own little hamlet here. If it weren't for your strangely overland building preferences, I'd say you were digging in!"

"It's temporary," stated Eremin flatly, trying to overcome the urge to knock the overbearing elf's teeth in. "We're still working on getting out, but the wagon springs need making. I don't suppose you have any wagon springs?"

"Afraid not, and taking people is again out of the question, given how many you have."

"Very well," said Eremin. "Shall we just trade?"

"So short!" exclaimed the elf. "No pun intended, I assure you, but this is hardly the eloquent dwarf I remember. Has something so wrong happened since last we met? Apart, of course, from being trapped here in this desolate wasteland."

"No, that would be it. That and trying to keep everything together whilst putting up with smarmy- that is, whilst handling diplomacy with our gracious trade allies." Emerin gave the elf a thin-lipped smile, who laughed off the slight.

"Very well then, my desolate little friend. Let us trade."

**Vignette: Another Life**  
26th Sandstone, 352

Ousire and Yngwie sat on the cliff edge, Yngwie swinging her legs and chiselling away at a small stone idol. She grimaced a bit at the result, taking a small file from her workbag and trying to shave off the edge on the idol's nose. She much preferred metalwork, but with the lack of trees in the region the forge shaft was the only way to get enough heat and that would still be months to completion. Ousire was silently stroking the nose of one of her donkeys as it nibbled on the coarse mountaintop grass.

"Whatcha thinkin', Ousie?" Yngwie asked, cocking her head to one side.

"Nothing," mumbled Ousire, avoiding her gaze.

"Really? 'cause that's hard, I know, I've tried! I used to try and think of nothing, but whenever I get close I get all these thoughts just flying into my head and I really don't know what to do with them all-"

"I'm thinking of home, alright?" snapped Ousire. Sometimes it was easier just to tell Yngwie things than listen to her babble.

"What about it?" asked Yngwie, completely oblivious to any and all given hints to shut up.

"My mum and dad," Ousire grunted. She sighed, moving her hand down from the donkey's nose and running her fingers through the little tuft of grass. Her eyes stared into the distance, to a faraway place and a better time.

"The farm," she continued, "and the grotto. There were sixteen of us, all cousins and uncles, and we lived in the hills above a little human town called Hornplenty. My uncles carved stone or cut wood. We couldn't afford a forge, so they would send me to the town often to fan the human smith's there as practice. My dad raised donkeys in the clearing over the grotto. My mum grew shadeberries in the summer and mullen roots in the winter. In autumn, we'd press duskjam and in spring we'd pound out mallota. My mum was such a cook - the best, we'd say!" Ousire laughed. "The best in fifty miles. She'd make these pastries from mallota and duskjam, with a bit of sliced hamfist from the human crops in town. When the caravans to the Mountainhomes would pass by, she'd sell baskets of them and they'd always tell her how much people liked those 'quaint little treats' in the citadels. I can't believe I found that boring, now. Today, I can't imagine a better life. Then, I used to dream of growing up and leaving the grotto in my brothers' hands, becoming a mechanic in the mountains where the citadels were. A life of wealth and glamour."

"What happened?" asked Yngwie.

"What do you think happened?" snapped Ousire, her head swivelling to face Yngwie's with the wrath of titans in her eyes. "The war happened, Yngie! First the elves, the *stotting* cannibals. My uncles fought them off while we fled, now they're chewed up and passed out in a bloody cesspit somewhere!" Ousire bit back tears and glared with renewed hatred at the horizon.

"The dwarves, though. That I can never forgive. *Billeting*, they called it. Bloody robbery, I did, but we let them in to do as they please, because who argues with a regiment of axedwarves? They broke open the mallota sacks, slaughtered the donkeys, drank all our beer and acted like animals. They made my mother cook her delicate pastries, then spat them at her and insulted her cooking as they ate. The commander was the worst. *Stotting* Stonebreaker, they called him. Officers are supposed to rein their men in, not goad them on! Then one of them look a liking to my mother. He grabbed her and... and..." Ousire's fist was clenched tightly around the clump of grass, tearing it slowly from the ground.

"She was quicker than him," sniffed Ousire, with a hint of pride. "Carving knife, under the jawbone. Killed him instantly, which was the only shame. The others didn't feel like playing after that. They cut her down in her own kitchen, carving up her body before her

husband's eyes and mine. My dad grabbed hold of one of their axes, yelled for me to run, so I did. He went down fighting, as far as I know."

"Then what happened?" asked Yngwie, who seemed enraptured by such an horrific tale as only someone with such a child-like mind could manage. Ousire stared at her for a moment before finishing.

"Then I grabbed the two donkeys still alive, saddled one of them and rode out of there as fast as I could. Survived on my own for a few weeks, ran into you. The rest you know." She looked at the clump of grass gripped within her fingers - her knuckles had gone white from the force. The donkey brayed plaintively at her having stolen his meal. Ousire's features softened and she opened her palm, letting the donkey nibble contentedly at the grass.

"I don't know why I'm telling you all this, anyway," she muttered.

"Because you're my friend, Ousie!" replied Yngwie, throwing her arms around the bemused smelter. After a moment, Ousire hugged back with a defeated smile.

"Aye, Yngie, you are." She pulled back, looking into the distance with a frown.

"What's that?," she asked. "Are those... people?"

*Eremin's Log*  
26th Sandstone, 352

I can hardly believe I am writing this, but one of the metalworkers, Ousire, spotted another trail of dwarves headed towards the camp. From the looks of it, eight in total.

*28th Sandstone, 352*

Loksvig strolled into the main office, where Emerin was buried until a pile of reports. He chuckled to himself, then knelt down and helped her out from under the mass of thin slates.

"Thank you," muttered a bedraggled-looking Emerin. "Fath's new 'report sorting mechanism' needs work. The bloody thing just launched my in tray at me. Naturally, Danielle's works fine," she added sourly, glaring at her own offending contraption, which essentially looked like a series of trays secured by tightened sinew.

"What was it meant to do?" asked Loksvig.

"Apparently the tray is supposed to tilt a report so it lands on my desk when I'm finished dealing with the old one, then tilt the old one into a separate pile neatly for storage. Mostly it just tries to kill me in a variety of interesting ways. Fath says it would work a lot better if we had any brass to make springs from."

"He says that about pretty much everything. How are you holding up?"

"I'm not! I've been held down - literally - by having to process all these people. Apparently they're another band of migrants like Ragna's lot; half of them criminal, the other half disenfranchised. It seems they were actually trying to make it in the desert moving from oasis to oasis until they ran into Ibon's caravan. She gave them a tip-off about this place and they thought they could actually settle down."

"You tell them about the wagon plan?"

"They weren't hot about it, they're really looking for somewhere of their own, but right now they're just glad to have a place to lay their heads. I guess I can offer them a wagon of their own once this is all established, but right now I just wish I could get a few moments to myself to be alone again. There's always Frey, or Broose, or Ragna, or even bloody Danielle wanting my attention on something." Loksvig smirked at that, then smiled a little more kindly. He leant forwards and kissed Emerin lightly on the forehead. She closed her eyes and exhaled.

"Solitude is something you cultivate," he said. "Sometimes you just need to remember."

As he left with a wink and a grin, Emerin's hand brushed over the tiny gemstone fragment he had left on her desk. She wrapped her hand around it and smiled, finding a brief moment of solitude.

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The lack of tension as a build-up is more a reflection of my developing skill as a writer than anything else, I'm afraid. I needed to have a reason to put a sherriff in, but neglected to foreshadow it strongly enough in advance. One of the dangers of not building these things into one's long-term plotlines. I shall be working on seeding things properly in advance where I can. The beauty and annoyance of journalistic/episodic storytelling is that since you can't go back and edit things, you really have to think on your feet about stuff.

I've added Khain to the military, and gave Pepta the rank of our one carpenter (poor Pepta), with Rivesand in this immigration wave. Khain, I may have to tinker slightly with elements of your backstory to get it all to fit, just to warn you in advance.

I should be impressed if Ragna gets a mood - she's stuck in full-time military mode. Even if she does, she can no longer make weaponry. :-[

Also, a disconcerting little fact. So far, that's ~25,000 words or 35 A4 pages written.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **[deleted]** on **May 15, 2009, 11:58:09 pm**

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I love Fath's obsession with Brass. I wonder if the map even has any sphalerite? He'll be mighty pleased to hear it, I'm sure!

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 16, 2009, 03:34:57 am**

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*Danielle's Inventory*  
9th Moonstone, 352

I went through the stocks this morning to discover a slight error in the lumber totals. A little investigation led me to the carpenter Pepta, who has been busy fulfilling a work order for bedding to equip the new apartments; a decision that caused some controversy, but sufficient wood remains to complete work on a wagon so long as no more is used. Assuming Pepta had simply made an error in receipt of the work order and was making additional beds I attempted to call her to cease, but she continued to work at the bed she was creating regardless. She refused any contact and to answer any questions put to him, later also refusing both food and water. Rumours are beginning to circulate that she is acting as Karana did. Given that she is also Nakasian, some of the Nakasian dwarves are watching her progress on this piece of furniture with quite a measure of interest.

A crowd gathered this afternoon as Pepta, beaming, unveiled her creation. The bed, Fastenedsculpture the Just Lutes, was carved in the style of a royal four-poster with bands of polished diorite inlaid on all sides. Impressive as the craftsmanship was, what boggled the onlookers most were the rows of fine tower cap spikes protruding from the base of the bed, where the mattress should be. Pepta explained that the spines were carefully arranged so as to support the weight of the back in the most comfortable position. Met with sceptical views, she laid down upon the bed herself to no harm, sitting up again thereafter and sliding off. Another dwarf, Kulet, tried the bed out to his surprising comfort and soon everyone was queuing up to have a lie-down.

When questioned as to whether this was the work of divine inspiration, he responded that though Nakas had guided her heart, the hands that built Fastenedsculpture were her own. More disconcerting was her request to have a chamber dug out for aesthetic reasons, half-way down the western cliff-face, claiming to have seen it in a dream. She was joined by Karana in this and soon had the support of most of the Nakasians. Emerin agreed to the request (demand?) put to her, though I made my complaint regarding a break of theme. The Nakasians insisted on a place to remember those lost in the war, and it is deeper tradition than I might dare break for dwarven places of mourning to be beneath the ground. Emerin has thus approved a site on Frey's recommendation, whilst Fath has drawn up a basic architectural layout.

18th Moonstone, 352

Excavation of the remembrance grounds has led to discovery of several valuable gemstone veins (purple spinel, cherry opal and rubicelle), prompting additional gemwork. This is finally getting Karana back to useful work in setting the newly cut gems. She seems often harassed by dwarves looking for spiritual counsel, which makes her an alarmingly influential sort of person. She did send me that basket of firecaps, though, so she can't possibly be all that bad.

3rd Opal, 352

"Frey!" yelled Ascubis from the far edge of the cavernous diorite mine. "I've hit something! Iron, I think!"

"Don't be stupid!" Frey yelled back. "You don't get iron ore at this layer!"

"It's not ore! Think it's meteoric!"

Frey hustled over with his pick, putting an end to the necessity of shouting. There, protruding from the edge of the chipped-out diorite wall, was an outcropping of blackened iron, jutting out in a strangely cuboid angle.

"Iron doesn't naturally form crystals, does it?" asked Ascubis.

"Not meteoric iron, not like that," said Frey. "It's not a clear crystalline shape, anyway. Look, there are these little nodules."

"Those aren't nodules, they look more like..." Ascubis trailed off, staring at the metallic hunk in disbelief. "By Deler's beard, are those rivets?"

Six hours of careful chipping later, the chest had been excavated from the rock face and brought up to the first floor of the Beerhall, where Danielle and Emerin were inspecting it along with Ragna, Broose, the miners, Karana and Ousire, who had been called because she had a metal drill. The chest itself was no bigger than a housecat and bore a small lock on the front. Impressively, not a spot of rust adorned it, though the iron had been blackened by heat.

"You're saying you found this buried in solid diorite?" asked Emerin.

"Once again, yes," replied Ascubis. "We were excavating the chamber when my pick hit metal. I was expecting native gold, so I started digging around it to get a better look and that's when I saw the rivets."

"How does a chest get into solid diorite? If you try and bury something in solid rock, even if you fill it in with cement that's going to leave traces."

"Answer seems pretty simple to me," volunteered Broose. "Iron doesn't melt in magma, right? You could get that if the lava solidified around the chest when it cooled."

"That doesn't explain how - or why - it got there," said Emerin. "None of this makes any sense."

"Do you want this thing opening or not?" asked Ousire shortly. "I've got things to do at the workshops, can't be standing around all day with the drill." Emerin gave her the go-ahead and she soon drilled through the lock of the ancient chest. The smelter pushed the lid back with some effort and the harsh squeal of iron on iron, relying on brute force to overcome the years the iron had enjoyed sealed shut.

Within the chest were three horribly mundane items; a broken glass statue of a dwarf, a palm-sized bauxite mural and the remnants of a leather-bound book. The pages of the book had long since burned to ash, but hints of the original inscription on the front cover still remained.

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"Are those dwarven characters on the book?" exclaimed Karana in amazement.

"It's an odd style of writing," confirmed Danielle, "but those are dwarven, yes. What strikes me more is the mural." She moved closer to inspect it.

The mural bore the engraving of three titans, towering over a massive stone gear. Upon each of the six spokes of the gear, the titans were building temples. The engraving was done quite masterfully, and the artist has scribed a tiny 'D' into one corner, but other than this little else was notable.

"What do you suppose it is?" wondered Emerin.

"An omen," announced Karana softly, almost fearing to speak it. "Pepta chose that site based on a dream. Might it be that the gods have willed us to find it?"

"If so," asked Frey, "then why?"

"I do not pretend to know," admitted Karana. "The divine is often mysterious in its actions. Perhaps this is a sign for us. A step in the direction we should take."

"I would not be too hasty to step on that path," rumbled Broose. "That journal doesn't look promising."

"It would have gotten very hot inside the chest when the magma flowed over it," Frey pointed out.



"Aye, that it would. But look at the scorching, see how it's mostly on one side? The magma didn't do this. That book was burned *before* it was buried."

21st Opal, 352

Emerin struck rubies today whilst excavating a bauxite deposit for the western shaft platform. She informs me that the pocket yielded three pounds of the stone and has recorded them into the book. It occurs to me that with the bauxite around the rubies now mined away, it is impossible for me to discover exactly how many pounds of rubies were in the deposit to begin with.

Frey suggested when I brought this up that it might be best for the sake of cohesion if I do not investigate that too closely. This does not seem a bad idea. Emerin has additionally decided on my advisement to keep the chest artefacts available in the Beerhall offices. Stories have been spreading about them, and a number of dwarves have come to see them for themselves. Who knows? Perhaps in time they may reveal more of themselves than we believe.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **May 16, 2009, 03:49:05 am**

Volume II? I wonder where Volume I is. Is there a Volume III? Or IV?

And who is Cerol Arsomethingt Sigunkikrost?

Cue ominous music. It appears our little temporary refuge has an history to it, deep within the rock.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Keita** on **May 16, 2009, 08:48:24 am**

Quote from: Iituem on May 15, 2009, 11:18:36 pm

I've added Khain to the military, and gave Pepta the rank of our one carpenter (poor Pepta), with Rivesand in this immigration wave. Khain, I may have to tinker slightly with elements of your backstory to get it all to fit, just to warn you in advance.

thats totaly fine, I kinda knock it up in 2 minets.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **May 16, 2009, 09:32:54 am**

could we possibly melt down the iron? volumn I is missing and we have part of volumn II so there must be a volumn III. u can not have just 2 volumns. wherehave u brought us? :P

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **May 16, 2009, 10:06:31 am**

Quote from: [deleted] on May 15, 2009, 11:58:09 pm

I love Fath's obsession with Brass. I wonder if the map even has any sphalerite? He'll be mighty pleased to hear it, I'm sure!

There will only be more brass.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 16, 2009, 10:31:48 am**

The quite sad thing is that I've been stuck indoors with rain today, so I actually have a few updates "buffered". A lot more of this is turning out to be story material than I had originally planned, which really slows down the pace at which events happen (in terms of calendar dates) in the fortress. I end up playing for a few months of game time, then something happens which is noteworthy and I pause and scribe the event. Then suddenly I realise I need to go back and fill in additional characterisation along the way, and that means I end up having to write up several entries of story before I can actually play any further.

Possibly this will decrease as the fortress matures and I will get more scope for Migrursut-style epic storytelling, but the early years (certainly once the pre-scripted events set in!) are looking like they could turn very very busy indeed.

Next update will be whenever I feel enough time has passed to merit one, really. :-[  
I have quite a bit of free time at the moment (jobseeking!), so I'm trying not to establish a quickfire update schedule which will have to be scaled back once I actually get busy again.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Riversand** on **May 16, 2009, 10:22:38 pm**

Hey, just to let you know my dwarf is Karana, my forum id is Rivesand... i think you mixed things up, Iituem.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 16, 2009, 11:32:55 pm**

4th Obsidian, 352

"Whatcha workin' on?" piped up a tinny voice from behind Fath's back. The engineer raised a bushy red eyebrow and turned around from the workbench to see a small, almost childlike silver-bearded young dwarf watching him like a hawk. Fath vaguely recognised it as being Yngwie, the girl who perpetually seemed to be hanging onto Ousire's dress hem.

"An engine that'll think for itself," answered Fath. "I've been doing the best I can with these here stone parts, but I really need brass-"

"Why?" asked Yngwie.

"Well, I could make springs, and there'd be less friction issues with the gears, and the temperature issues would be solved-"

"Why?"

"Well, brass has a lower coefficient of friction, so-"

"No, I mean why are you making a thinking engine?"

"What? I don't know! It's just there in my head and I want to make it happen!"

"Ohh, so you're mad," said Ynwie sagely. Fath twitched, his hand involuntarily reaching for a spanner.

"I'm not m-"

"It's okay," Yngwie cut in. "I'm mad too." Fath's hand paused over the spanner handle.

"Er, y'are? How do you figure that, lassie?"

"Well, people tell me I'm mad, so I suppose I must be. That nice cooking fellow, Urgie, he's mad too. It's okay, I understand." Yngwie smiled cheerfully.

"So..." said Fath, drawing his hand away from the spanner and looking at Yngwie like some manner of strange new creature, "why do people tell you you're mad?"

"Well, I saw things the way they should be and tried to put them right! Same as you, same as Urgie. I see people's faces the way they should be and I try to fix them. Urgie sees what nice pieces of art people would make and, when he got the chance, tried to fix that too. You see that machines should think in a world where they don't, so you try and fix that!"

"That's not really... I mean, I'm just trying to show them..."

"You're mad, mister Fath! And that's okay! Do you know why it's okay?" Fath shook his head, bewildered by the young metalworker in front of him. She spread her arms and beamed like the sun.

"Because we'll show them, mister Fath! We'll show them *all*."

*14th Obsidian, 352*

Khain dropped into the seat at the Beerhall, battered and bruised in his leather armour but satisfied. His neighbour, Kulet, had a distinctly more dour expression and handed him a cup of rum. Khain grunted to the dwarf and took the cup, drinking thirstily.

"Bloody knackerin session today," rumbled Khain. "Captain bloody reaps you with her sword if you put a foot wrong, but so help me it works."

"Reckon they're okay sorts, then?" enquired Kulet, eyes on his own cup.

"So far as I've seen," said Khain cautiously. "The captain seems fair enough, at any rate."

"There's all sorts said about that one. Apparently she fought in the war with the Granite Spider, over a century back. That much seems accurate, she's old enough."

"Don't know about the rest of the town though. This leader, Emerin, half the time it seems like she lets the creepy firecap girl make the decisions, and the other half there's some miner telling her what to do. Who put her in charge, anyway? Makes me nervous, that sort of thing." Khain shrugged, dismissing the paranoia with another quaff of rum. "At least it's been a good day. How was yours?"

"Let me see," mused Kulet. "I cut some diorite blocks, then hauled some diorite, then put some of those blocks into a wall... oh, yes! I cut a bit of microcline at one point. That was the highlight of the day. It's been absolutely thrilling."

"So you're getting into this whole stoneworking thing, then?"

"What? No! By Nish's eastward gaze, Khain, you can learn how to gut a man with a tablespoon but you can't pick up sarcasm?" Kulet muttered and took another drink. "It's driving me insane, all this bloody blockwork. They say it's for industry, but it's all bloody Nakasians around here! I've seen their leader, this holy dwarf Karana's work. It's marvellous craftsmanship, Khain, you wouldn't believe it, but what do they do with the proceeds? Piss it all up against the bloody wall, that's what! There's no re-investment, no infrastructure being developed here. Bloody Nakasians spend it all on parties."

"Well, the captain says that Emerin girl is trying to get wagons to get us all out of here, so she hasn't spent much time worrying about infrastructure."

"Get us all out? Where is she going to send us? The home country's ruled by a bloody elf now and every other direction is sand, barren rock or swamp! We can't even take the swamp route because that's Kulettögum's territory and they're hardly going to take any foreign immigrants, are they? We're bloody stuck here, and it's time the leadership around here realises it."

"Aye, well," mumbled Khain. "Good luck with that."

"What? You don't think this is a problem?"

"Aye, but I learnt a long time ago about the dangers of rash actions. Doesn't matter what it is, how good the intent is, people get hurt. So me, I'm sticking to my training and my spear, alright? Get a little hunting done, if I can. You want change around here, you want industry? Make it happen." Khain sniffed, draining the last of his mug. He stood up and turned to go.

"Where are you off to?" asked Kulet irritably.

"Bunks. You should too, it's getting late."

"Bah." Kulet waved a hand dismissively. "Night, Khain."

"Night, Kul."

**Vignette: The Prospect of Freedom**

*28th Obsidian, 352*

"Two years," pronounced Fath. "I cannae believe it, laddie."

"Neither can I," rumbled Broose. The pair of them were sat atop the slaughterhouse roof, watching the revelries below. Half the community were singing songs and dancing in the Nakasian temple whilst the other half were doing the exact same thing but louder in the Beerhall.

"Where were ye, two years ago?" asked Fath.

"In a hole in the ground, waiting for the Hammer. Well, I guess you could say I was in a hole in the ground, in a hole in the ground, waiting for the Hammer. If you wanted to be crass."

"Aye, I hear ye. I were workin' in a sewage hub, did y'know that? Pumpin' bleedin' dwarven waste eighteen hours a day. Feels like a lifetime ago, now."

"Feels like yesterday to me," grunted Broose.

"That's just old age catching up to you," came a voice from behind them. Broose glanced back to see a grinning Loksvig and a rather red-faced, happy-looking and exceedingly sloshed Emerin draped over him.

"Can it," returned Broose, "or my axe'll be catching up to you instead. Thought you two were at the party."

"We snuck away for a little alone time," said Eremin, bursting into a rather girlish giggle before swigging from the skin of gin she had on hand. "What are you two up to?"

"Aye," chuckled Loksvig. "Have you finally found love in a highland dwarf's flaming red beard, Broose? I always knew the tension between the two of you would reach a head eventually, so to speak." Broose made a one-digit gesture that brought another set of giggles from the inebriated jewel thief. Fath fortunately didn't seem to have a clue what was being implied and was attempting to work it out when Urgash, Danielle and Frey clambered up the ladder onto the roof.

"Couldn't wait to get out of that party," muttered Frey, whose shirt looked to have been freshly washed whilst he was still in it. "Bloody pirate girl can't hold more than fifteen rounds, threw the lot up all over me."

"Only got to ilmenite, then?" asked Broose casually. Frey nodded.

"Aye, and she didn't even get to the gold-plated hubcaps or the wench with the pigtailed beard. Datan picked up the slack, though, and the captain had no trouble putting down a whole barrel herself."

"How was the party over at the shrine?" asked Loksvig of the other two newcomers.

"Nowhere near enough firecaps at the buffet," sighed Danielle. "Otherwise, a good spread."

"I got talking to this charming girl called Yngwie," said Urgash, completely oblivious of the raised eyebrow Danielle gave him. "She was saying how people's bone structure is always never quite right, and how if people would just let her chisel it straight, everyone would look so much prettier. Once the scars healed over. Of course, I wholeheartedly agreed."

"You did?" asked Emerin, grimacing at the visions this conjured up.

"Oh, yes. Would save me a lot of work carving the totems later on."

"What tot-"

"Moving swiftly onwards," prompted Frey, "the forge shaft is nearly ready. All that needs finishing are the platforms and you shall soon have all those springs you've been wanting, Fath."

"Ah, me beard is aflame wi' joy!" cried out Fath.

"Really?" said Loksvig. "I thought you were born that way."

"Which means," pressed Frey, "we'll be able to complete the wagon. After the stunt that carpenter Pepta pulled we have barely enough wood for one, but she's more than willing to build it himself to the highest standards. This is it, guys. We're nearly there."

"Wow," murmured Emerin. "Hard to believe we'll be leaving it all behind."

"I doubt it'll go unused. A lot of the migrants really aren't even that bothered about getting out."

"How? It's a desert. It bakes in summer and freezes in winter, and nothing in between. There's not even anything here."

"There's food," explained Frey, "and water. Trade, too, thanks to us. We've managed to scrape past basic survival here, Em. They have a wall, defenders, a mushroom cave. Even a forge, when we're gone. In a strange way, they may prefer this barren hole to the homelands."

"Why?"

"Because it's theirs. It's home, now, for those whose homes are lost to the winds. We may wish to move on, to pursue our dreams elsewhere, but for many of these dwarves this is their dream."

"So what do we do about them?"

"We leave it to them, Em. Captain Ragna is a natural leader, almost as much as you. She has their respect, she'll manage okay with the place. When the wagon is ready, we can just take off quietly, say we're going to find more wood like you said. We'll be able to skip town without a fuss, ride onwards to Abbeyverse and to our futures."

"That what we're going to do, then?" Emerin asked. *Or is it*, she thought privately, *what you'll buy?* There was a murmur of muted assent from the others as if the thought of escape, so close now, seemed distant. Frey raised his wineskin.

"To the future, then," he toasted. "To getting out of here."

The seven of them touched mugs and skins and drank, looking out over the scenes of revelry in a deepening silence, each of them lost in thought.

The Encampment in 353 (<http://www.mkv25.net/dfma/map-5808-gearabbey>s)

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Oops, that I did. A little embarassing, given that 'Rivesand' actually got a spot of characterisation in the update. I replaced him with good old Kulet instead.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Enzo** on **May 17, 2009, 12:57:46 am**

I think the conversation between Yngwie and Fath is my favourite part so far. Just...so great. That shrine there is quite a piece of work. With the shaft and all. You chose a fun map. It has goblins, right? Urgash seems creatively stifled by the lack of humanoid corpses.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Kanute** on **May 17, 2009, 04:18:01 am**

I'm biased and I liked this one the most: Yngwie saying "We'll show them *all*!" is excellent! I really like the interactions of the slightly (or not so slightly) deranged dwarves. The setup sorts out the innocent from the criminal and the insane, and then forces them to work together.

I really enjoy this, and I definitely would not mind quickfire updates!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 17, 2009, 06:08:56 am**

A new year dawns, and with it New Year accidents. A group of lads went for a stroll along the spire construction platforms after some pretty heavy imbibing last night, then struck upon the brilliant idea of doing some twilight masonry. It took about ten minutes for Dastot the soaper to fall nearly a hundred feet onto his head. By Deler's own grace, he hit the sand, but his head's been split open and he hasn't moved since they carted him back to the camp.

3rd Granite, 353

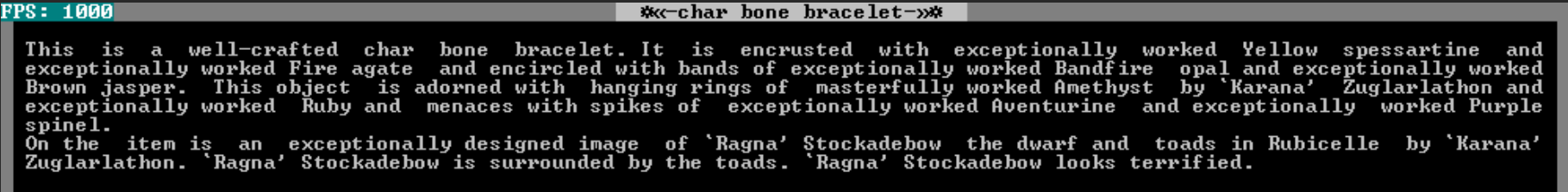
The recent construction accident involving the poor soaper Dastot has brought the question of death to a lot of our minds. Dastot, bless his soul, survived the fall but has fallen into a deep trance and will not awake, quite possibly a result of the massive head trauma. Nothing much can be done for him save try to feed and water him, but the plans for the mourning chamber have been amended to include provisions for a burial chamber for Dastot as well, just in case.

10th Granite, 353

The caravan from Loyaraafe arrived, the elves bringing their various wares. There were a few logs of wood, but the remainder was largely cloth of various types, which we have taken on for the sake of craftwork. The total value of the goods was not any great deal, so they were willing to accept a barrel of these quaint little mallota pastries that Urgash learned to cook from one of the dwarves here. The elves tried some and apparently they just can't get enough.

The elves also brought a small pet toad, though not for trade. This precipitated an amusing event when captain Ragna caught sight of it and let loose the most effeminate shriek anyone has ever heard her make. She ran full pelt away from the marketplace and locked herself in her office for an hour, mumbling something about 'the Toady One' and something to do with blood. She eventually emerged after the elves had left and refused point blank to discuss the issue with anyone.

To commemorate (mock?) the occasion, Karana carved a depiction of Ragna fleeing from a horde of toads out of rubicelle and set it into one of the trade bracelets. She offered it to Ragna as a gift and got a slap to the face in response. Loksvig thought this was a particularly good joke and says he'll buy it as soon as he gets enough firecaps, provided we don't trade it off first.



Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Keita** on **May 17, 2009, 06:24:08 am**

possesed, demented child who wants to chisle peoples spines...

I'm honered to post in a thread of pure win

Loving the Today One bit

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 17, 2009, 08:33:36 am**

Is that a request or a reference to poor Yngwie? o:

Also, I'm declaring another mod. I'm sick and tired of the fact that when I kill a bunch of goblins, they're inevitably wearing more than the net worth of my entire fortress. It essentially kills any reason to make trade crafts for me.

So I've dropped the modvalue on GCS in this game to 2. Goblin clothing will now merely be worth double rather than ten times ordinary clothing, and the trade screen stops being so horribly, *horribly* broken.

(If you want to know how broken, I've played to summer and met the human traders. I had enough to buy out their entire stock and a half just selling all the GCS silk clothing from a goblin raid.)

Next update when I'm sure I've written enough to keep my buffer steady.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **May 17, 2009, 12:19:44 pm**

Quote from: Iituem on May 16, 2009, 11:32:55 pm  
"Because we'll show them, mister Fath! We'll show them *all*."

ok, before i was a little creeped out that my character was tailed by the insane chick who likes to change peoples faces, but now she's my best friend. anyone who messes with her will be turned into fuel for smelters and will have parts of them decorate my mechanics! ;D

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **May 17, 2009, 12:38:44 pm**

See, Ragna's old enough to remember when the Toady One created the world, and remembers his mighty glory. She can see inklings of this glory in his holy creatures, thats why she cant stand them. :D

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 17, 2009, 12:55:18 pm**

Quote from: Eagle on May 17, 2009, 12:38:44 pm  
See, Ragna's old enough to remember when the Toady One created the world, and remembers his mighty glory. She can see inklings of this glory in his holy creatures, thats why she cant stand them. :D

You have no idea how fortunate the starting date of this fortress is for me regarding that. No dwarf is alive today who wasn't born after Year Zero.



Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **May 17, 2009, 01:06:21 pm**

Quote from: Iituem on May 17, 2009, 12:55:18 pm

Quote from: Eagle on May 17, 2009, 12:38:44 pm

See, Ragna's old enough to remember when the Toady One created the world, and remembers his mighty glory. She can see inklings of this glory in his holy creatures, thats why she cant stand them. :D

You have no idea how fortunate the starting date of this fortress is for me regarding that. No dwarf is alive today who wasn't born after Year Zero.

So Ragna's basically the only one of the Originals still alive? Cool.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 17, 2009, 01:26:42 pm**

18th Granite, 353

Dodok stumbled up the northern mountain face, dragging his sack of diorite to the workshops for block cutting. He grunted and groaned under the weight until he reached a small plateau, stopping for a moment to catch his breath and wipe the sweat from his brow. Zan, his faithful companion, barked sharply down the edge of the plateau.

"What is it, boy?" Dodok called. The hound started growling, then launched itself off the edge in a flurry of barks cut short by a yelp and high-pitched whine. Dodok rushed to the edge of the plateau and looked down where, to his horror, Zan lay bisected in a bloody heap. Five goblins, two in iron chainmail and wielding a claymore and scimitar respectively, looked up at him.

"Goblins!" Dodok managed to cry before he call became a blood-curdling shriek. He stared down in horror at the bloody blade protruding from his chest and, as he slid forward along it, the leering eyes of the goblin swordsman turned to grey.

Dwarves milled back and forth as the goblin raiders struggled up the hill, dropping blocks and tools and abandoning their work to run for the safety of the encampment. The goblins just managed to crest the mountain's edge when the the four militia members, wielding swords, axe and spear, crashed into the band like a wave. Garbed only in leather armour, Datan rushed forward and swung up with his axe, cleaving one of the unarmed goblins open. As his first victim's soon-to-be lifeless form fell to the ground in a writhing heap, Datan's axe stroked straight down again, clanging heavily against the armoured chest of the claymore-wielding swordsman. The goblin raised his blade to strike, but Datan pulled back his axe and rammed it into the goblin's gut, causing the creature to vomit in disorientation and his blade to harmlessly crash to one side of the axedwarf. Khain, spear in hand, stepped behind the swordsman and flanked him, jabbing with his spear until Jora's eloquent swordstroke sliced apart the tendons in his shield arm, leaving the goblin open for the axedwarf Goden to bring his weapon down upon the goblin's skull with a mighty crack.

The three surviving goblins cried out and began running in different directions. Jora leapt down from a higher ledge and caught one of the goblins' legs with her sword, tripping it over with a flourish. The wrestler hit the ground with a heavy thud and managed to turn back upwards just in time for Khain to drive his spear through its chest, watching it writhe to stillness with grim satisfaction. Ragna had already begun chasing the second swordsman and even though she held a head start, Ragna's indomitable toughness and strength were outflanked by Datan's athletics and the young fighter sprinted past her and leapt into the air, screaming a battlecry.

The goblin fell to the floor and looked up at Datan's silhouette, gleaming in the spring sun, as it descended upon her. She rolled to one side, the axe narrowly missing her fingers as it struck the hard chalk ground. The goblin raised her shield to block the blow as again and again rained down the axe's blade. With a mighty heave, Datan brought the axe down upon the shield, battering it into the goblin's chest and breaking her grip. Panting and dripping with sweat from the exertion, Datan brought the axe up and let loose a fell cry, swinging the axe about and striking the goblin's chest from below in a vile uppercut, splitting open the ribcage and exposing the organs to the elements. Datan slumped by the body, holding himself up by the hilt of his axe.

Ragna strode over the crest of the hill at a leisurely pace, sparing a glance to the creature.

"Finish her," she commanded. Datan looked at her in blank exhaustion.

"Gigin's teeth, captain!" he managed. "I've already axed two of them today! Give a guy a break."

Ragna rolled her eyes, then readied her sword and swept the unfortunate cretin up with it in a mighty blow, launching the body a full five feet away where it splattered into a messy heap upon the chalk, organs spilling freely upon the ground.

A lone goblin escaped the slaughter of the axedwarves, fleeing for the safety of the desert sands. As he ran, he could not believe his luck. The others were all gone, surely, but the rumour had been confirmed about this settlement and he would live to receive the reward for finding it! Once he had passed this dwarf he could tell everything to his commanders, who would - *wait, this dwarf?*

The goblin ran smack into Broose, who had been on a morning jog through the desert. The old soldier reached out with one meaty hand and grabbed the goblin by the throat, lifting it into the air as it flailed desperately in an effort to escape. He had no other weapons on his person, so he simply squeezed until the goblin's spine cracked, then let the body strike the sands with a most satisfying thump. Broose regarded the corpse for a few moments, then scratched his stomach as he remembered the time of day.

"Gigin's teeth," he muttered. "I need breakfast."

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Nope. She's about a hundred and thirty, putting her in her late twenties when she went to war. Dwarven lifespan clocks out at between 150-170. It seems to be a rather rare occurrence for dwarves to actually reach their life expectancy, so she's a pretty damned rare occurence. when she went into war and came out in one piece.

When I said no dwarves from before the zero date now live, I meant it.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Lord Dullard** on **May 17, 2009, 02:02:33 pm**

Excellent storytelling! Glancing at your map, I do have to ask: how are you going to pump magma up the shaft? With screw pumps, as far as I know, you need a four-tile long space in which to operate (one floorless tile in the back to 'suck up' the magma, two for the pump itself, and one floored tile in front to deposit the magma in). Unless, that is, I'm missing some very obvious design element.

I'd like to request a dwarf when one is available:  
Stug (Maggot), a dwarf who was babysnatched from the mountainhomes as a young child and raised in goblin society as a warrior-slave. After being captured in an attack on a dwarven outpost, he was then tossed into prison and forced into slave labor. He escaped during the riots caused by the seven founders, and has been wandering aimlessly ever since, unsure of what to do with his newfound freedom. Eventually he stumbled onto Olonkulet and tried to blend in, although his halting speech and strange behavior make him something of a social outcast. If possible, make him a recruit in the military; otherwise, assign him to whatever undesirable task you please. :)

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **May 17, 2009, 07:18:41 pm**

when i reach legendary mining can i stat training as a wrestler then swordsdwarf...well after u get another miner. :D..... what a shock that goblin got when he had to ge past the "other" dwarf.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Keita** on **May 18, 2009, 02:39:43 am**

Jora: Die goblin

Khain:**KILL STEAL!**

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 18, 2009, 03:01:37 am**

23rd Granite, 353

Nearly the whole community had gathered in the cavernous chamber, a smooth dome of diorite. The only absentee was the catatonic soaper, Dastot, entombed in restless slumber in his room. In a slow procession Dodok's body, wrapped in white-dyed pipemoss cloth, was carried through the crowd to the waiting open sarcophagus by the militia members. Ragna stood by the coffin as the highest ranking Onolite to perform the rites whilst Broose stood slightly behind her as her second, surveying the crowd. On the opposite side, Emerin stood with her head bowed slightly in respect for the dwarf. When the body had been placed into the casket, Ragna stepped forward to deliver the blessing of Onol the Tin Silver, calling for Him to take Dastot into His arms, for his soul to be reforged in Onol's realm as pure dwarven steel. She offered condolences to those aggrieved that his spirit was in Onol's pure grasp now, that they should take comfort in knowing that he waits for them in the great beyond, his steel soul singing out from Onol's forge.

The sad truth was that Dastot had been a loner and, although on cordial terms with many, few would truly miss him. His greatest companion had died before his eyes, only for him to journey forth behind it in swift pursuit. Many were shaken by his death however, as thoughts of mortality crept upon their own minds and fear of the ancient dwarven enemy stole into their hearts. In the moment's silence called upon by the rite, Emerin looked over the gathered crowd and saw the uncertainty in their faces. She stepped behind the sarcophagus and addressed them.

"I see a lot of faces here. A lot of hearts shaken. I imagine most of you are thinking about the future right now. I know I am. What it might hold; if there will even be one.

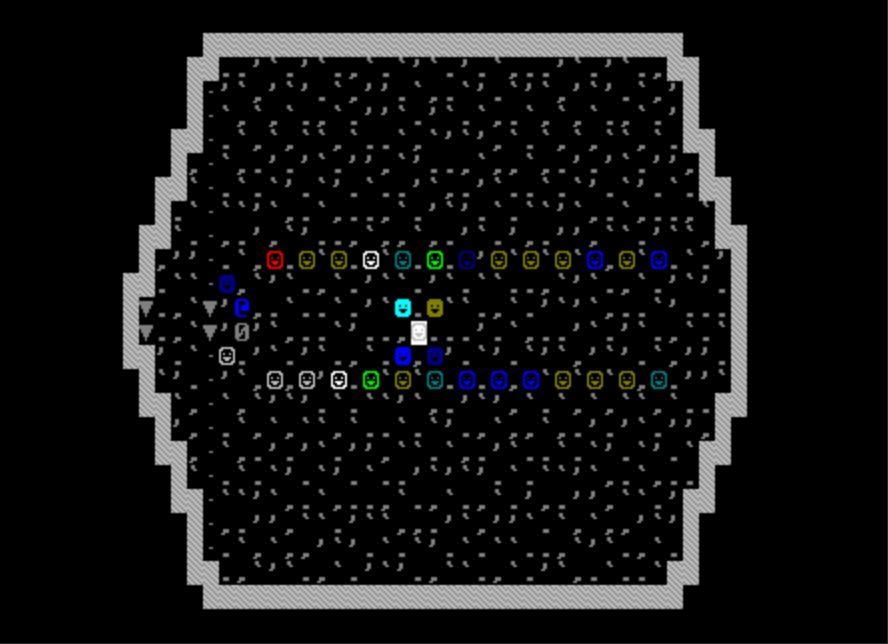
"We all came here to get away from something. The law. The war. The past. We came looking for a new life, a new future. I know many of you think you might have found it here. Many of you believe that somehow, in this blasted and barren wasteland with not a tree in sight, you can forge a life for yourself. A free life, a life to be proud of.

"Maybe you're not so certain about that now. Maybe you want to keep running. I don't blame you, believe me I understand. You should remember, though, that you have friends here. You have dwarves who'll look after you, who you can look after in turn. Dwarves like the Captain, like Jora and Datan and Goden and Khain, who will be watching your back when the troubles come. Dwarves like Karana, who will sit and listen and help you with your problems, who always makes time. There is food and shelter and friendship here, and the trust of your brothers, may it be as strong as Onol's own steel.

"Those who want to go, you have my blessing to find your futures elsewhere. For those who stay, I cannot promise what the future will hold.

"I *can* promise there will be one."

Eremin brought her gaze over the members of the crowd, letting the message sink in. She nodded to the pallbearers, who knelt and picked up the heavy stone casket, proceeding down the steps with it to the small tomb below, where the small sarcophagus belonging to Dodok's dog Zan lay, surrounded by a multitude of tiny stone *ular*. With heavy hands they sealed the stone door of the tomb and left Dodok forever in the hands of Onol.



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Will be a little while before I can get Stug into the story, m'lord. Same for Ascubis' training request (though I'll endeavour to get it in there).

Also, regarding the vent: That is what we in the industry call a *design flaw*, or more colloquially, a cock-up. I somehow remembered that magma forges had to go over magma, but forgot they had to be on the z-level *directly* above them. So much for the plan for a massive column of rising hot air.

There is actually an alternate design I could use, where magma is pumped in through a second tower to the top and allowed to fall down back into the vent, producing a rather spectacular magmafall. I am reasonably certain this would also kill any dwarves not shielded from it by solid walls.

That does give me an excellent idea for a late-stage trap, though.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **May 18, 2009, 07:15:14 pm**

dont worry ascubis can wait :P

First, wonderful story.

Second, is there still an opening by any chance?

Kel Ragebrew: Brewer/Axedwarf/Herbalist

Born to a lowly farmer family, sent to a single jagged spire of stone rising from the heart of a  haunted marshland.

It would have never been thought of, but passing adventurers discovered rich veins of silver and gold there. Not wanting to miss a chance to line their pockets, nobles sent out Kel's family, along with some other workers.

His father, a humble farmer, who knew his way around a still and anything you could give him. His mother was a bit more martial, a guardian sent to handle anything that came from the swamps. He was left in his father's hands, as his mother was wise enough to not carry him into battle against the foul creatures of the marsh.

He learned a great deal about the swamps, the still, and the axe. When he became of age, he took up the axe and ventured into the swamp, picking the rare plants no one dared look for. He became quite proficent with the axe, killing the small undead and unnatural creatures.

From the plants, he brewed strange drinks. He tested them first on himself. Some of them were quite fine, others left him in bed for days at a time, wrecked with horrible nightmares and visions. This did not stop him from venturing back into the woods, harvesting anything he could. Others dared not sample his brew, but it sold for a good coin with the traders, almost as much as the silver trinkets they spat out.

His mind was gone, but he understood it, when the fortress was finally over run by the denizens of the swamps. He was prepared for it, and took with him a small copper still, his trusty bronze axe, and the cloths on his back. He managed to survive by picking plants along the way, fermenting some (By throwing them in the still and hauling it on his back till it got somewhat drinkable)

Well, that was fun, hope you like it. If you can't get a male, well, I dun mind, Kel is a common enough name.

*16th Slate, 353*

Kulet trudged into the blockworks, bleary-eyed and fed up.  He signed off on the register slate and sat down at the little chalk bench designated as his own; at least for today.  Who knew what tomorrow might bring?  A day hauling barrels of fat, perhaps, or an exciting afternoon stacking these same gods-damned blocks into a wall.  He picked up his tools with a resigned motion and started chiselling out blocks from the lump of diorite hauled into his workstation with all the energy and enthusiasm of the living dead.  Somewhere around the twentieth job of mind-numbingly repetitious block carving, he noticed a little slate tucked under his bench and pulled it out to look at it.

"Make the change you want to happen," it read, signed with a K.  Kulet smirked, picked up his tools again and paused.  He stood up again, discarded his tools and left the blockworks in search of one of the old quarries.

"So what exactly is going on?" asked Emerin when she finally arrived on the scene.  Several of the blockworkers had abandoned their duties to gather around the workstation in question, but on seeing Emerin several of them guiltily headed back to their blockmaking.

"Apparently he just snapped," answered Danielle, who was checking through the block records.  "Said he wasn't making any more blocks, grabbed a boulder of tetrahedrite from the quarries and started working.  Been there since morning.  One of the blockmakers brought it to my attention when he didn't show up for breaktime - apparently this guy always shows up for breaktime."

"This sounds familiar," commented Emerin drily.  "What are we looking at here, then?"

"I'm not entirely sure.  I can see hinges, but there's a lot of sculpture going on here.  I guess we'll just have to come back in a few days and find out."

Four days later, Kulet put the finishing touches onto his masterpiece.  Functionally it was a cabinet, but he had sculpted it as a scale-model replica of the Mountainhomes, down to the defensive turrets, intimidating gates and tiny sculpted waterfalls.  He had even managed to scrounge a bit of scrap iron from the goblin attack and have it engraved with the legend; "The Frilly Jail", apparently a satirical reference to the former imprisonment there of many of the community's inhabitants.  He turned to address the crowd of dwarves who had gathered to view the finished work, mostly fellow blockmakers.

"I claim no dreams of prophecy," he said, "no divine inspiration in its making.  I need it not for Nish, the East Wanderer of Wheels, has made plain to us Her wishes in Her holy texts and in the works Her faithful have done over the centuries.  I built this cabinet in honour of Her and as a reminder to each of us that we are failing Her designs in this community.  Certainly there is trade, and was it not said that trade is the lifeblood of a grotto, of any settlement?  When Nish walked the world in the days of myth, did She not travel in search of trade to support Her barren homeland?  Did she not take up the cowl of a dark wanderer and journey East, always into the East, until the day She found the secret of wagoncraft and sails?

"I say to you then that we must honour Her wishes and reap the benefits of Her blessing!  We must craft and spin and wright, not merely these functional things but art and beauty.  Let us seek Her blessing by building a shrine to Her, a shrine to Trade, let it be there that the wagons of the travellers and merchants are met, not in a rough shelter upon the river's stony bed!  Let us build a chapel in the name of Nish, and let Her hand guide us to magnificence and wealth as we unite in trade and crafts!  Praise be to Nish!"

"Praise be!" yelled a few members of the crowd, breaking into cheers and applause.  From the rear of the blockworks, Danielle and Emerin glanced at each other with raised eyebrows.

"So you've decided we'll be building a temple, have you?" asked Emerin flatly.  She rested her forearms on the smooth chalk desk and steepled her fingers.  Stood behind her, Danielle bore a similar expression.

"Not so much decided," said Kulet, gesturing off-handedly, "as exhorted.  I have encouraged people to address the lack of a Nishan shrine within the camp, especially given our reliance on trade here."  He smiled as endearingly as he could manage.  It was less than effective.

"You may have noticed," Emerin pointed out, "that we are already fully engaged on getting the metalworks running and excavating and smoothing out the burial chamber.  What makes you think we can convince people to take up yet another construction project?"

"Well, I'm not saying people should do it for free."



"You propose we should foot the bill, then?"

"Not at all. That would hardly be the Nishan way, would it? Between now and when I made that speech, I made a number of calls on Nishans within the camp. We're all willing to donate time, materials and firecaps towards making this happen. Nearly seven hundred firecaps' worth of funds have been gathered. We will pay for the temple to be built." Kulet smiled winsomely and Emerin glanced back to Danielle. The savant examined one of her notebooks and shook her head.

"That will pay for slightly less than a quarter of the work that needs to be done," she calculated. "Where will you get the rest of the firecaps from?"

"In time, Nish will provide," said Kulet faithfully. "What is important is to start now. Or would you prefer to risk the wrath of the East Wanderer? To have our trade routes blighted, our supplies of fresh ale and food cut off? The Nishans are a substantial number in this camp, Emerin, even if we are not so outspoken as the Nakasians. Is it not the purpose of government to reflect the will of the people?"

Emerin regarded him coolly.

"Not," she remarked, "according to what I've heard most nobles say. Perhaps it should, but I would say that the responsibility of government is *not* to be swayed by the words of an influential few." She raised a hand as Kulet began to protest. "That is not to say your words do not have merit. We would be foolish indeed not to give Nish Her due, especially now that the matter has been invoked." She sighed and leant back into her stone chair, rubbing the bridge of her nose.

"You will have your temple, and the camp's coffers will meet sixty percent of the bill. As you have said, Nish and Her faithful can provide the rest. I am sure that will inspire a great sense of patriotism amongst your flock. Now, if there is nothing else, do not let me detain you further."

Kulet smiled and prepared to offer his thanks when he noticed the way Emerin was looking at him. Wisely, he chose to instead nod graciously to them both and left with due speed. Danielle raised an eyebrow at Emerin, who shrugged.

"He's right," she said. "It's a political game now, and we would be very foolish indeed to risk the wrath of Nish... or Her cult. Can we make the bill?" Danielle frowned, sorting through the math in her head. She nodded.

"We'll have to hold back work on the burial site, but yes. I'll send for Fath to talk with Kulet about the designs."

"Very well then. Make it so."

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FPS: 1002	‘Kel Ragebrew’ Ilralimsal, “‘Kel Ragebrew’ Treatyraced”, Medicine Dwarf
‘Kel Ragebrew’ Ilralimsal has been happy lately. He dined in a legendary dining room recently. He slept without a proper room recently. He has been satisfied at work lately. He is a worshipper of Zas Coppercolored the Blueness of Dye. He is a citizen of The Searing Crypts. He is a member of The Free Prison. ‘Kel Ragebrew’ Ilralimsal likes Red sand, Sterling silver, White chalcedony, coral, wolf bone, war hammers, scepters and cows for their haunting moos. He is somewhat reserved. He tends to avoid crowds. He is rarely happy or enthusiastic. He is grounded in reality. He is very trusting. He needs alcohol to get through the working day.	
FPS: 1003	‘Pepta’ Etostamost, “‘Pepta’ Containedtowns”, Carpenter
‘Pepta’ Etostamost has been ecstatic lately. She admired a fine Door lately. She admired a fine tastefully arranged Statue lately. She dined in a legendary dining room recently. She slept without a proper room recently. She has complained of the lack of a well lately. She has been satisfied at work lately. She is a worshipper of Nakas. She is a citizen of The Searing Crypts. She is a member of The Free Prison. ‘Pepta’ Etostamost likes Kaolinite, Copper, Wood opal, ivory, Pipemoss Fabric, crossbows, beds, earrings and coins. When possible, she prefers to consume dwarven cheese. She is often nervous. She appreciates art and natural beauty. She likes to try new things. She is incredibly frank and candid in dealings with others. She needs alcohol to get through the working day.	
FPS: 2025	‘Karana’ Zuglarlathon, “‘Karana’ Shipmyth”, Holy Dwarf
‘Karana’ Zuglarlathon has been ecstatic lately. She dined in a legendary dining room recently. She slept in a very good bedroom recently. She admired a fine tastefully arranged Door lately. She admired a fine Door lately. She has been satisfied at work lately. She is a worshipper of Nakas. She is a citizen of The Searing Crypts. She is a member of The Free Prison. ‘Karana’ Zuglarlathon likes Claystone, Steel, Yellow jasper, Candlenut, siamang leather, horn, Simm’s heather Fabric, mountains and querns. She absolutely detests rats. She is often nervous. She doesn’t often experience strong cravings or urges. She can handle stress. She tends to avoid crowds. She has a fertile imagination. She is guarded in relationships with others. She is disorganized. She needs alcohol to get through the working day.	
FPS: 1010	‘Stug’ Imushost, “‘Stug’ Dikefolded”, Guard
‘Stug’ Imushost has been ecstatic lately. He had a satisfying sparring session recently. He admired a fine Bed lately. He was honored to join the Fortress Guard. He has complained about the draft lately. He dined in a legendary dining room recently. He slept without a proper room recently. He has been satisfied at work lately. He was able to rest and recuperate lately. He is a faithful worshipper of Gigin. He is a guard of The Free Prison. He is a citizen of The Searing Crypts. He is a member of The Free Prison. ‘Stug’ Imushost likes Bismuthinite, Steel, Carnelian, circles, mules for their stubbornness and giant moles for their noses. He absolutely detests purring maggots. He is self-conscious. He doesn’t often experience strong cravings or urges. He is confident under pressure. He is unassertive. He does not have a great aesthetic sensitivity. He doesn’t like to compromise with others. He is immodest. He is compassionate. He needs alcohol to get through the working day.	
FPS: 1005	‘Khain’ Alāthmeh, “‘Khain’ Boltsinched”, Elite Wrestler
‘Khain’ Alāthmeh has been ecstatic lately. He had a satisfying sparring session recently. He admired a fine tastefully arranged Door lately. He talked with a friend lately. He made a friend recently. He admired a fine Restraint lately. He slept without a proper room recently. He has been tired of eating the same old food lately. He took joy in slaughter lately. He was able to rest and recuperate lately. He is an ardent worshipper of Gigin. He is a citizen of The Searing Crypts. He is a member of The Free Prison. ‘Khain’ Alāthmeh likes Periclase, Zinc, Pipe opal, ivory, moons, drums and centaurs for their strength. He absolutely detests flies. He is often nervous. He is quick to anger. He enjoys being in crowds. He is not a risk-taker. He is often cheerful. He is organized. He has a sense of duty. He strives for excellence. He needs alcohol to get through the working day. He is getting used to tragedy.	

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Keita** on **May 19, 2009, 05:27:57 am**

What god is Gigin?

Also keep up the exelent work, you've compeled me to write my own stuff, when I'm a /ot better at dwarf fortress anyway =P

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 19, 2009, 06:14:00 am**

Goddess of Fortresses, Minerals and War. I've added the full worship list to the first post of the thread for convenience.



There is currently a buffer of about 7,000 words written. I have an exam Thursday, so time is (futilely) being spent revising. The buffer ensures updates for the next few days, but it also drives me slightly mad in that I can't actually play DF until more has been posted, so as not to get too far ahead where things like character requests are concerned.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Keita** on **May 19, 2009, 08:43:09 am**

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how do you see what gods you dwarfs have?

exams suck but luckily I passed mine alright :D but I do have to retake english language again which sucks >:(

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Kel the Oblivious** on **May 19, 2009, 11:07:02 am**

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Hehe, awesome, medicine dwarf. Profile needs more "In constant state of inner fury" but otherwise I like it.

Journal of Kel Ragebrew, Slate 20th 353, inscribed on a chalk slate, penned in crushed plant ink.

I wander what sorts of plants this place has. I know there are some useful, tasty ones, the others just don't know how to find them. They see a bush and think "Kindling" I see a bush and think "Are the roots edible? Does it bear fruit? When do the flowers bloom and what carries pollen for them?" Little matter, they have an effective farm plot system, and firecaps are plentiful, although the small lass who tallies everything seems obsessed with using them as our method of currency. More effective then coin, I believe. You can't eat a sack of coins in the wilderness when you get lost. Nor can you use coins to spice your dinner. She is ahead of her times, just needs to work out the kinks.

Beginning to run out of plants from the swamp. I will see if the seeds can grow here. A few buckets of water, a few of fresh earth, and a slight indent in the ground so rain doesn't wash it away, and I should be able to make a nice little garden for myself. Wouldn't want this fine folk to miss out on what I have seen. The only problem is I need a pick so I can put it just below ground but open to the sky. Perhaps I can bribe one of the miners with some fine gut rot. After so long of only glow wine, I am sure one of them would be willing to take me up on the offer.

Oh well. It seems one of the masons has finished being mad and created a truly wonderful piece of art. A scale replica of Mountainhome, to be used as a cabinet. His choice of stone I dislike. Could the mad one not have rushed out and taken a slab of the magnanite just down the hill? No matter, it pleases the eye to stare upon it. However, the zealous speech coming from him worries me. We already have one cult forming, we do not need more. Maybe I say so because the gods have never touched my life. No... Not the gods. Something much older...{The rest of the tablet is covered in strange designs, which began scribbling off onto the walls.}

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Fortis** on **May 19, 2009, 11:11:05 am**

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This is a very interesting read.

I'd like to join, please. I'll take a farmer. Name him Fortis, if he's male, or Fori if she's female.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 19, 2009, 12:50:48 pm**

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*28th Slate, 353*

"More brandy?" offered Emerin, tilting the jug over Ragna's mug. The captain gave an agreeable nod and Emerin poured a little more of the bronze liquor into the vessel. She leant back into her chair and placed the jug on the desk, picking up her own mug.

"I wanted to commend you and your dwarves on dealing with the goblin raid last month," she said. "You all did yourselves proud."

"Thank you," accepted Ragna. "The dwarves are in good spirits, though Goden took too hard a blow to the head during sparring. He's training with Broose now. A more than proficient axedwarf before it happened, so he needs fear no ridicule." Emerin nodded in agreement. Loksvig had mentioned once about the stigma attached to marksdwarves who'd simply failed basic training and had to be assigned to the bowsquads without even seeing battle.

"You all showed solidarity, leadership and direction. The community needs that."

"We have you to thank for that. I know it's been difficult for you, for all of us, but you've kept this place together. After Dodok's death, people looked to you for leadership and you were there."

"That's actually the issue," explained Emerin, averting her eyes. "I won't be."

"What?"

"The wagon's nearly finished, captain. I'm getting on it when it is and I'm leaving."

"You're abandoning us?" asked Ragna, a cool steel edge to her voice.

"No, no," muttered Emerin, waving her hand and not daring to look at the dwarf opposite. "If any others want to leave, I'll take them with me, and if there are too many then we'll get more lumber and make more, like we said. It's just that..." She took a breath. "I don't think any of you want to."

"Pardon?" asked Ragna, the steel remaining in her tone. Emerin looked at her directly now, a hint of red at the edges of her eyes.

"Look, I've seen how people react to the announcements about the wagon. Lukewarm responses, as if they agree it's a good thing but it's not for them. I'm afraid that if I call out for people looking to leave, all of you will just shove your hands in your pockets and pretend you didn't hear me!"

"All of 'you'? All of *us*, Emerin."

"You know what I mean," said Emerin dismissively.

"Yes, I do," pressed Ragna, not letting this go. "With you it's always been 'them and us', 'us' and 'the migrants'. You're polite, you're diplomatic and you work hard, but you don't really connect, Emerin. The dwarves out there, the ones that marched miles across a desert to find you? They - we are your people, Emerin. We chose to follow you. You're still clinging to a dream where it's just seven dwarves trying to get out of the desert, and that's just not the case any more."

"It's the only dream I have!" moaned Emerin. "You chose to follow me? I didn't choose to lead you! This all got thrust upon me! You want to know how this started? A week after we crashed here, the seven of us were gathered around the boat one evening rationing out the glow wine and Broose suddenly asked who we were taking orders from. Dani said she'd take them from anyone who made sense, Fath said he'd go along with anything and Frey started demanding why we should have someone giving the orders anyway. Next thing I know, Frey and Broose are practically at each other's necks over the issue and I just snap and tell them both that if they're going to act like children, *I'd* give the orders and they could bloody well follow them."

"Then they did! I can't believe they actually did, but from then on I was stuck with this whole *mission* of getting us out of here, of trying to get everything in order. It wasn't so bad at first. Everyone chipped in, there were only seven of us to look after, but then suddenly you- I mean, you and the dwarves you travelled with all joined us and people were looking to me for *real* leadership. Now I have files, and a desk, and an office. *This is not my life, Ragna!* All I wanted was to get out of gaol, get to a little coastal town somewhere and find one of my retirement caches. That was the plan. Get out, get hold of a stash and it'd be wine and jam from then on. I did not ask to be made leader of some gods-damned camp in the middle of a barren desert!"

"You did not ask," said Ragna evenly, her voice softening, "but you took up the mantle anyway. I find it fits you better than you imagine." Emerin sighed and cradled her head in her hands.

"I don't want it. My job was to get us, the seven of us, out of here. I can finish that job, at least. When the wagon is done, we'll be getting on it. The camp is yours. You and everyone who stays. You built it, you've earned it. There's more than enough scope here to survive on your own."

"Nothing I say will make you change your mind on this?"

"No, but I understand why you try. I promised you a future here, Ragna, and I've done everything I can to ensure it. I never promised you I'd be a part of that future." Emerin ran her hands through her hair and looked up. "Do me this last favour? Ask around, see if anyone wants to leave - really wants to leave. If they do, tell them to be at the marketplace the day the wagon is prepared to join on the woodcutting expedition. I won't doom anyone to stay here that doesn't want to."

"Aye, I can do that." Ragna drained her mug and stood up. She drew her sword and saluted with it. "It's been an honour, ma'am."

"Yes, well," blushed Emerin. "I'm not gone yet. You're, uh, dismissed, Captain. Good luck."

"Also to you, ma'am. Also to you."

Emerin watched the captain as she left, then looked down at the desk before her. She picked up the ancient mural from the caverns and regarded it, deep in thought about the future.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Aldaris** on **May 19, 2009, 02:01:24 pm**

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It's great up to now, and I'd like a dwarf, please.

I'm not sure abot the choise, so I'll let you pick the one that fits in best, either

'Mincewind'  
job: Kook. (Yes, with two 'K's)  
gender: Whatever  
Crime: multiple charges of attempted poisoning, 4 charges of succesful poisoning

Concept: Basically Discworlds rincewind only in cook form, never managed to pass guild exams, and is therefore banned by law from calling homself 'Cook' hence the second K. Is famous for being able to make even the very air taste terrible.

Personality: Hopefull coward, always hoping that running away today will allow him to keep on running away tommorow. Likes to stay away from interesting situations, and especially hates to figure in stories. He always ends up in them anyway.

OR

'The Foreman'  
gender: whatever is available.  
job: Miner/something administrative.  
Crime: Convicted for none, but fled from both the war and the law because he was being tried for impersonating officers of the duke, giving false mining orders that caused undisclosed amounts of damage within a number of caverns under the hammerers quarters that officially don't exist.

Personality: Wahtever fits backstory best.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 20, 2009, 02:16:09 am**

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*1st Felsite, 353*

"It's done," called Pepta through the doorway to Emerin's office. The former gem thief looked up and gave her a nod.

"I'll be along shortly," she said, feigning a smile. "Best we gather up those who'll be going on this logging expedition." Emerin watched Pepta leave, then finished penning the last lines of the note. She left it on the desk as she packed the last of her belongings (as well as a few choice gems and one of Karana's studded amulets) into an oilskin bag, giving one last glance about the office. It was strange to make an exit like this, but she'd made a hundred such exits before.

You never ran. You always walked away, smiling and waving, and they never knew you'd left for good until you were gone. Now, like a hundred sets of accomplices before them, she had to smile and wave for the camp.

She reflected on the beauty of the escape as she stepped out into the sun, where dwarves were already busy loading up the wagon, Broose sat waiting at the reins of the two horses tethered to it. Everyone knew a logging expedition could last a few days, especially with desert trees so scarce. It made sense to pack plenty of food and water for the journey, with spare just in case the wagon broke down. Emerin had taken cares to ensure there would be plenty enough to get them through the desert and to the southern swamps without difficulty. From there they could purchase supplies from the human border towns and make the rest of the journey to Kulettögum. As she worked down towards the wagon, a number of dwarves waved to her cheerfully, fully expecting to see her back within a few days. She waved and smiled in turn, turning years of practised people skills to use. Emerin made her way to Captain Ragna, who stood near the wagon in full leather uniform, sword at her side.

"Where are the others?" she asked, puzzled.

"There are no others," Ragna informed her. "I asked, I was answered. Nobody is interested in leaving. Don't worry, I didn't tell anyone of your plans."

"I can't believe that," protested Emerin. "Surely some must have wanted to leave, to move on. It's dwarven nature for there to be dissidents in every crowd."

"That's true but I think you swayed all of them over nearly a month and a half ago, back in the cave. They're staying because of you. You gave them hope for this place, even if you can't yet find it yourself. I thank you for that, ma'am." Emerin stood speechless, a gnawing dryness at the back of her throat. She turned from Ragna without another word, clambering onto the wagon. Loksvig was faithfully enough waiting in the back. Emerin walked over to Danielle, Fath, Urgash and Frey, stood at the edge of the crowd and looking up at the wagon.

"You coming, then?" she asked.

"Not today," said Frey. "Think we'll be good here for a bit longer."

"What? What are you talking about? This is what we've worked for, guys. This is our ticket out of here."

"Yes," said Urgash sheepishly, scratching the back of his head, "that's sort of the thing. I wanted to start a dog farm and, well, I've got one here. Forty two dogs now." He shrugged helplessly, offering a sad little smile.

"And I wanted to get a town on the firecap exchange," added Danielle. "Only I realised that we're already on the firecap standard here. If I stick around, maybe I can make it stick."

"And you, Fath?" asked Emerin, hardly believing her ears.

"Truth be told, lassie," sighed Fath, his bushy red eyebrows furrowing, "my heart's not into gan' back to the homelands. I've got my workshop here, I can work on the things that are important and, well, I'm accepted. It's like yon said, lassie. We have friends here. People who accept us for who we are. I'm getting on in years, and I just don't think I could take the stress of havin' to make my connections all over again. I'm sorry, lassie. I'm sure you'll do well, but it's just not for me." Emerin turned to the last of the four in shock.

"You too, Frey? What's keeping you here?"

"Nothing particularly," admitted Frey in his usual easy tones. "I mean, I do have the mine here, but I can start a mine anywhere. I suppose you could say that there isn't anything taking me anywhere else. Besides, I have someone to wait for here."

"Who?" asked Emerin. Frey pretended not to hear her and continued.

"No, Emerin, we're good here. You go on ahead. There's a whole world for you out there, and you've fulfilled your promises now. Go find that future of yours." Frey smiled at her and waved. For some reason Emerin couldn't bring herself to smile back, fleeing to the wagon instead and giving Broose a choked command to drive. The blonde axedwarf nodded curtly and whipped the horses forward, driving the wagon out of the camp to the cheer of the crowd. As the wagon drove away Emerin felt a deep wrenching in her gut, as if something had been torn out and left behind.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **May 20, 2009, 07:11:38 am**

Will Emerin be gone for good? I can invent several reasons for her to come back, but I likewise can invent several for her to stay away.

So I'm wondering, how will you manage the three departing dwarves in game?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **May 20, 2009, 08:46:04 am**

hmmmmm\*thinks really hard\* they could be killed in game until an immigration wave where they had found all these dwarf while cutting wood. and they do come back with wood. but i dont know how he would do that

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Refuge (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 20, 2009, 09:04:23 am**

*2nd Felsite, 353*

Emerin awoke to a distinctive sensation that something had gone wrong. For one thing, the wagon had stopped. For another, it was tilted to one side. She clambered out of the wagon to find Broose and Loksvig sat by the dipped corner, inspecting a wheel in the sand. It appeared to have broken off the axle and a series of tools lay stretched out on the sand as they tried to figure out what to do about it. Broose was experimenting with roping the wheel back on with twine.

"Figures we'd break down half a day into the desert," muttered Broose. "Gonna be a while before I can make any headway with this, so make yourself comfortable." Emerin rolled her eyes and sat down on the sand next to them. She watched in silence as Broose fiddled with the rope, periodically asking Loksvig to lift the corner of the wagon so he could try and fix it on, then taking it back off and fiddling some more.

"Do you think we did the right thing?" she asked eventually.

"What?" grunted Broose. "'course we did. Got out of a bleedin' desert hole, nothing to complain about there. We'll have this fixed and be on our way in no time."

"You set on that guard job at Kulettögum, then?" she asked.

"Aye, whatever," grunted Broose, focused on the wheel.

"You were a guard back at the camp, though." Broose ignored her and kept working. "Why Kulettögum?" she pressed. "Why not just try and make it back there?"

"Why Nist Akath?" snapped Broose harshly, turning towards her. "You're the one who wanted to get out, pursue a life in an icy hole on the other side of the world. Why chase your dream there? Why didn't *you* stick around?"

"I..." Emerin faltered. She couldn't think of a response.

"We couldn't give up," Loksvig answered for her. "None of the three of us could. Fath and Urgash, fair enough, they're able to find contentment. Danielle did have the firecap situation how she wanted. Frey... surprised me, staying. I hadn't thought him the type to give up. We couldn't, though."

"What are you talking about?" said Broose.

"We survived in a desert hole for two years. We didn't go mad, we didn't kill each other, we got our heads down and worked to survive and we kept working because we had a goal; getting out and getting free. If we'd have given up on that dream, we wouldn't have made it. We wouldn't have been able to push ourselves like we did, carved a home out of practically nothing but barren rock and spite. Now we're here, we've got to our goal and we're finding that maybe it isn't what we really wanted. Thing is, we can't give up even now. We have to see this through to the end just because we're too bloody-minded to do otherwise." Broose stared at him for a few moments, then started working on the wheel again in silence.

"Broose, I-" Emerin began.

"Look," the axedwarf muttered, "let's just work on getting the damned wheel fixed. Gods, I wish we had a decent carpenter on hand."

"Maybe they do," said Loksvig. "Look!"

He pointed to the distance, where a long trail of dwarves were marching across the sand. Emerin leapt up and began waving to them.

"...quite fortunate we ran into you," one of the dwarves was saying as another dwarf finished jury-rigging the axle. "Kivish here happens to have been apprentice to a master wheelwright before the war."

"We're very grateful for the assistance," smiled Emerin, "and once again you're welcome to some of the food in our stocks."

"Boss," said the dwarf Kivish, looking up from the axle, "this'll hold, but not for more than a day or so. They're going to have to replace the part." The dwarf tutted and shook his head.

"That's a shame. Still, you folks are welcome to come along with us, we're nearing the end of our journey anyway. Heard tell there's still a place out here that isn't under Queen Atis' rule, so we're heading there. You want to join us? Sure they'll have a part for you there."

Emerin glanced back at the pair behind her. Loksvig wore an expression of bemused irony. Moose glowered, muttering to himself. Eventually he threw up his hands with a grunt of exasperation.

"Fine!" he growled. "At least there are drinks there." Emerin turned to the dwarf with her most charming smile.

"We'd be glad to."

3rd Felsite, 353

As the wagon and retinue of migrants approached the low walls of the camp, a pair of figures strode out to meet them. The captain drew her sword and saluted whilst Frey merely gave a polite nod, wearing the same knowing, easy expression he had worn when the wagons had left.

"Hail!" cried the migrant leader, who had sat up front of the wagon with Moose and Emerin. "My name's Urnriddled, and we've come far in search of this desert camp. Who might you be?"

"Captain Ragna Stockadebow," called the captain, not taking her eyes from Emerin. "Well met, master Urnriddled."

"Are you in charge here?"

"Nay," replied Ragna. "That would be the Mayor." Urnriddled nodded and looked to Frey. Emerin blinked in surprise at the development.

"What say you, then?" asked Urnriddled. "May we join your community?"

"Why," Emerin muttered, "you scheming, conniving little-"

"I don't know," interrupted Frey jovially. "Let's ask. Mayor Emerin Claspfocus, what say you then?"

Emerin's complaints dried up in the face of bewilderment.

"What are you- When did you-" she stammered.

"The village - and begging your pardon Lady Mayor, we *are* a village now - held a vote in your absence. It was agreed that given your leadership of the community in the last year and the general will of the villagers, you should be the first."

"But you can't- I mean, I can't-"

"I believe Urnriddled asked a question."

The migrant dwarf turned to Emerin with a smile of pleasant surprise and an expression of hope in his eyes. Emerin sighed first, then burst into laughter. Outmaneuvered again! If she were a more pious dwarf she might imagine it the hand of Fate, but she could see well enough the glint in Frey's eye and it took little imagination to picture the studied intents of the savant Danielle as well. She gestured with her hands in surrender and smiled warmly to the dwarf beside her, offering him her hand.

"Welcome to the village, Urnriddled. You and all of yours."

End Chapter Two

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **May 20, 2009, 09:14:28 am**

:D very nice. i wonder who tampered with the wheel\*hides his wood splintered pick :D\*

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Fortis** on **May 20, 2009, 11:44:25 am**

Heh, a nice turn of events. I'm looking forward to see where this will go.

Um, if you do accept my character, should I go ahead and make a backstory for him?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Keita** on **May 20, 2009, 11:59:54 am**

*Iituem has gained experience*

*Iituem has become a Legendary Bard*

love it, awesome story telling, keep it up

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 20, 2009, 02:48:55 pm**

Chapter Three: The Six Shrines

*Emerin's Log*  
10th Felsite, 353

It's been a solid week of meetings, administration and legwork getting everything in order. Twenty two migrants! Twenty two! There's even a child in the mix now. With fifty-five people now in the village we really do *need* a Mayor's office. I've upgraded Ragna's position from sherriff to captain of the guard, though we don't really have a guard as such yet. The captain can still just about keep people in line on her own and we need all the hands we can get hauling. I'd rather not put our current militia onto guard duty, either. We need a



quickly responsive team when it comes to an attack - I don't want our armed forces with their minds split between solving crimes and defending the village.

With everyone's hands busy on the burial site and the Nishan chapel we haven't really been able to get much expanded on the residential side of things. Loksvig suggested that with public opinion being rather high at the moment and with a fair few 'firecaps' in gemstones stowed away I might be able to pass planning permission for a set of mayoral apartments.

I'm not settling down. That's not me, I know that. Still, this mayor gig's a yearly thing, and maybe I could do with laying low for a year or maybe two or three whilst the rest of the world forgets about old Emerin Claspfocus (or Urist Stonesalves, or Likot Burntether, or Kol Steelbright...). There's perks to the job (I can make sure of that!) and there are worse places to hide out in, though it strikes me as bizarre that I can say that, given the location. If I'm going to stick around I may as well make myself comfortable, right?

12th Felsite, 353

The ironworks is still non-functional, though Ousire is busy enough smelting down the iron from the squad of goblins that killed Dodok. I've ordered a set of goblets forged by the end of the year, to give their deadline a more concrete focus. If we're really lucky, Fath might even get some brass gears into the deal.

15th Felsite, 353

Kel Ragebrew ran through the caverns, sibilant whispering dogging his heels. At the edges of his vision vague brown markings covered the walls but he paid them no heed, fixated on the febrile twilight emanating from a distant cave. Kel reached the base of a great mound, falling to his knees and clambering up the filth-covered rocks toward his goal. He climbed faster, the whispering behind him growing closer and louder, joined with the scrabbling of unseen claws and the shifting of pebbles. In a last effort, Kel pulled himself up to the mouth of the cavern, bathed in jaundiced light and caught but a glimpse of the horrors within before all was drowned in screams.

Kel sat bolt upright in his bunk, sweat dripping from his brow. He cast a wayward glance to the small copper still resting by the base of the bed, then around at the other bunks. No other dwarves had woken, it seemed. Rubbing his temples he tried to clear his head and began searching for the chalk slate he used as a diary. In an effort to focus on other things he considered the efforts he had made to grow some of his swamp plants, to little avail. He was fine at identifying such herbs but little use at growing them. The far door to the communal bunks opened and there was a snatch of conversation from the Beerhall's common room. Kel spotted one of the farmers, Fora, then cast an eye back upon the little copper still as an idea came to him.

-----

'Fora', I'm afraid, due to a shortage of non-married farmers. Feel free to make up a backstory and indeed write in character posts. I actually had a rather different subplot in mind for Kel, but that post has caused it to take a rather divergent direction to the original intent which should tie nicely in with all the other things going on.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Fortis** on **May 20, 2009, 04:27:04 pm**

From the log of Fora

At last, we've found it! A settlement of dwarves free from those thrice damned elves control! The gods pitied us in our plight, and led us to the mayor of the town itself. It seemed she was just as in the dark about his title as we were, though, during the amusing conversation we had at the gate. But she accepted the title, and invited us in, gods be praised. There's some quirks to this village, but at least we won't have to pay any taxes to those pointy eared weaklings.

Since this is going to be my new home, I had best get used to the quirks. The strangest by far is their currency. Everything is valued in firecaps, oddly enough. Strange, but just fine by me, I can grow as many as I need from the soil. On the other hand, I may wind up eating most of the 'money' There's nothing I like quite as much as a spicy firecap roast. Oh well, I'll work things out. Maybe I can see if any of these desert plants can be grown. Farming in a desert will be a unique challenge for me.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **May 20, 2009, 04:57:31 pm**

Funny thing, I actually thought they were leaving. Emerin would've come back, maybe, after she found that all her stashes had been looted of their valuables (or some other fabricated reason), not after their wagon breaks down the moment they get out of town.

Oh, well. All hail Mayor Emerin Claspfocus!

Emerin Claspfocus, Mayor, has mandated the construction of certain goods.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Kel the Oblivious** on **May 20, 2009, 05:45:42 pm**

Sorry about throwing a wrench in your creative gears. Do love your save though.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Boksi** on **May 20, 2009, 06:59:45 pm**

Heh. Just finished reading through this. You've put more thought into my mod than I have :P

Anyway, considering the *amazing* quality of your story, I feel no shame in asking for a dwarf and subtly hinting to the name of the mod you're using to make sure I get one.

Name: Ofeigur(if male) Vigdis(if female)  
Profession: Anyone capable of making a musical instrument.  
Description: A dwarf whose obsession is music. Unfortunately, the only way he/she could make a living playing music was as a bard, playing for the nobles. And the last time he/she tried to play for one of *those*, he/she was almost immediately thrown into jail for "producing such scandalous music as time drive man and beast mad with dark urges". Seriously, his/her music isn't that bad. It's just a little Music With Rocks In.

So yeah. Think Terry Pratchett's Soul Music, if the dwarf had been the protagonist. You might be able to involve him/her with the creation of Olonkulet's final form, ~~Sky~~Dwarfnet.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Aldaris** on **May 21, 2009, 02:06:32 am**



Quote from: Boksi on May 20, 2009, 06:59:45 pm

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Anyway, considering the *amazing* quality of your story, I feel no shame in asking for a dwarf and subtly hinting to the name of the mod you're using to make sure I get one.

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So yeah. Think Terry Pratchett's Soul Music, if the dwarf had been the protagonist. You might be able to involve him/her with the creation of Olonkulet's final form, ~~Sky~~Dwarfnet.

Just quite how much discworld are we throwing into this? I already asked for a Rincewind ripoff

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Boksi on May 21, 2009, 07:53:45 am**

Well, that Discworld reference was only there for, well, reference. He/she's really just a somewhat innovative musician.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Keita on May 21, 2009, 11:19:16 am**

Quote from: Boksi on May 20, 2009, 06:59:45 pm

It's just a little Music With Rocks In.

hmmm, entreging

seeming as we're on discworld can I have job title of God of things lost behind the sofa?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Aldaris on May 21, 2009, 11:46:25 am**

Something with An-something, I'll look it up.  
EDIT: Anoia, also god of lost causes, things stuck in drawers, and stuff you put down just there but can't seem to be able to find anywhere.  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discworld\\_gods#Anoia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discworld_gods#Anoia)

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem on May 21, 2009, 01:53:20 pm**

**Vignette: War Stories - The Elven Retreat**  
*23rd Felsite, 353*

Captain Ragna stormed into the Beerhall, carrying a runtish creature by the scruff of his shirt. She tossed him down on the floor by Urnriddled, who was busy nursing a watered-down mug of ruli brew - drinks were running thin until the next wagon arrived. The dwarf looked down at the wretch with surprise.

"This yours?" she growled. The scrawny figure scrabbled to the wall, turning so its back was against it and glaring up at Ragna with beady eyes.

"What, Stug?" asked Urnriddled. "Not really; he's been following us for days."

"Want fight," croaked the filth-covered mess in the corner, its hair tousled and rags covered in dust. It habitually scratched the back of its hand with yellowish fingernails.

"I'll say," muttered Ragna. "Little beggar tried to strangle one of the horses today, got a well-deserved kick for his trouble." The miserable figure bore a bright red welt on his cheek as evidence to the claim.

"Ah, it's not his fault," said Urnriddled with a touch of pity. "From what I can tell he was kidnapped as a young lad, raised by goblins. Fortress got burnt down, the dwarves that rescued him felt he was too much trouble, so they shunted him into the Mountainhomes. Apparently he got out during the big break a couple of years back, been living off the land since."

Ragna looked the creature over. It wasn't easy to admit it, but Stug was definitely a dwarf. He didn't look dwarven, though, and he certainly failed to act it. Worst of all he had no beard. That is to say, he tried to have no beard. The ragged patches of hair and criss-crossed scars around his chin and under his nose were evidence of ham-fisted efforts to shave. Instead, Stug bore scars across his face, quite clearly intentional and possibly even self-inflicted. They were long and surprisingly graceful affairs, curved into almost elegant tattoos of ravaged flesh that gave Stug a wild air and bore stark contrast to the accidental or incidental scars that covered Stug's chin and, if one were to look through the layers of dirt, all over his body.

Ragna shook her head and waved at Urnriddled.

"Well, he's your problem tonight. Next time I see him causing trouble like this I'll clap him in irons for his own damn safety." She plodded over to the booze table and gestured to the bartender Mincewind, flicking a handful of firecaps onto the bar. "Gin, neat," she ordered.

"Captain," Mincewind began to protest.

"I know we're rationing," said Ragna, cutting her off, "but after today I need something to take the edge off it." The bardwarf rolled her eyes and drew a small but strong cup from the barrel, passing it to the captain and pocketing the sun-hardened firecaps that everyone was using for currency these days.

"I don't suppose I can interest you in a rock cake whilst you're here?" Mincewind suggested with a hint of pleading to her voice. Ragna glanced at the innocent-looking tray of grey cupcakes. They looked like they were *probably* made of redbulb flour. She decided to pass and shook her head to Mincewind's disappointment. Ragna glanced about the beerhall and was waved over to a corner table by Jora, Datan and Khain. She sat and muttered various greetings.

"Hey, captain," said Datan. "Tell us another of your stories. I'm getting sick of this swill and it looks like you've the only hard liquor in the hall."

"Stories?" asked Khain.

"Aye, the captain's got war stories enough," laughed Jora. "Not a kill stealer either, unlike *some* people. She was trained by the Old Elven Masters, don't you know? Ooh!" she exclaimed. "You haven't actually told us that one yet, cap'n."

"Aye," replied Ragna stoically. "I haven't."

When it become evident she had no plans to continue on the topic, all three militiadwarves began pressing, cajoling and attempting to bribe her into a tale. Eventually she gave in.

"All right, all right," she growled. "If it'll shut you up. So there I was, waking up in an Elven bed..."

The soft, silken thread of her hammock did little to allay the trepidation Lieutenant Ragna felt upon waking up. Six elves, garbed in loose-fitting mauve robes, looked down at her. Four of them were armed, though she noted with some relief that their swords were sheathed for the moment. The unarmed pair of elves were studying her with a judgemental air.

"Awaken, dwarf," one of them redundantly commanded. "What is your name?"

"Ragna," the lieutenant replied somewhat hesitantly, then stiffened her resolve. "Lieutenant Ragna Stockadebow, 10th Infantry. What business have you with me?"

"Saving your life," chuckled the other unarmed elf. The first gave him a scathing look.

"That remains to be seen," said the first. "I am Druid Avetho Thiniolova, and you are being held until you are fit for trial."

"On what charges?" demanded Ragna hotly. She grimaced as the searing pain in her back flooded back to her.

"Acts of war, betrayal of trust and defilement," said Druid Avetho sternly. "Your dwarves were given permission to pass through our neutral lands on the understanding that you would not bring your war here. Yet you attacked the goblin forces given equal leave to pass through our lands, shed blood on the forest floor and worst of all, *far* worse, you brought fire to our lands! Do you have any idea how many trees were slaughtered by your callous actions? It is a pity only that more of your dwarves were not spared by your own inferno, that we might slay them for this desecration!"

"Easy, Avetho," commented the other Druid. "You'll give yourself an ulcer."

"How can you be so calm, Inefa," growled Avetho, "knowing what this filth has done?"

"Chiefly because I don't *know* what she's done," replied Inefa. "We only suspect. I am sure that when the other Druids have finished inspecting the site we will have a clearer picture of events."

"What have you done with my equipment?" asked Ragna, directing her question to Inefa in the hope of some actual compliance.

"Your chainmail has been kept in storage," responded Avetho hotly, "and your axe has been destroyed, as is only fitting of such a barbaric tool."

"That was my mother's axe!" shouted Ragna again, flinching as the pain crashed over her like an ocean wave. She could feel it dragging her back down and struggled to stay conscious. "You tree-hugging pansy, I'll--"

"Do nothing," said Inefa in a calm, firm voice. "Nothing but rest, lieutenant. You are in no state to argue, or to be trialled." He passed a hand over her eyes and Ragna felt the heavy weight of her aching body. "Sleep."

Ragna slept.

When Ragna next truly awoke, not counting brief moments of stirring, muddled consciousness in the twilight of sleep, she had the sensation that some time had passed. To her surprise she found the pain in her back had mostly gone, though a quick check with her hand revealed that the dressings there were fresh and still covered the majority of it. With a little effort she was able to sit up on the hammock and inspect the room she had been kept in.

The floors, walls, ceiling and indeed most surfaces were wooden, though upon on closer inspection Ragna realised it was not as she had originally assumed. Rather than boards of cut lumber, the floor was comprised of interlocking branches, fused together and flattened into a level surface as if they had grown that way. The roughly circular walls followed a similar theme with round spaces for windows, the many branches fusing together at the ceiling to create a watertight roof. Looking to the windows it appeared the branches spread outwards into bright green leaves, and the subtle dip at the centre of the room from which the thick initial branches sprung confirmed Ragna's suspicions; the whole room was constructed from some manner of living tree. The room was bare save for a wooden table, Ragna's hammock, a tightly-woven lintgrass rug and surprisingly enough a marble jug and goblet on the table's surface. Ragna inspected the designs on the jug, recognising the familiar engraving as a scene from the history of the dwarven clan The Long Bolt.

Realising how thirsty she was, Ragna poured herself a drink from the jug and grimaced at the sight of the crystal clear spring water. She knocked back the goblet anyway, following it up with a second and third. Unable to see any apparent exits, the dwarf walked over to the window and peered out. The view was limited by the broad expanses of foliage, but Ragna could see the forest stretch out at length. Several of the trees had the same notably expansive crowns, suggesting additional rooms such as the one she was presently kept in.

"The view's better from up above," came a voice from behind her.

Ragna spun around to see the elf Inefa standing near the centre of the room. Behind him a thin silk rope ladder stretched down from the ceiling, where a dark lintgrass covering had concealed the room's exit amongst the fused branches. Ragna hadn't even heard him approach.

"I thought I was your prisoner," said Ragna. "You're unarmed and you've left the exit wide open."

"Indeed," said Inefa easily. "You are also unarmed, you have no idea where in the forest this is and you are quite literally surrounded by our rangers on all sides. Even if you aren't aware of it, you are being watched like a vole."

"Don't you mean a hawk?"

"No. The hawks are the ones doing the watching. How are your burns?"

"Itching, but I'm surprised I'm alive. How long was I out?"

"About six weeks, give or take." Ragna blanched. "You spent much of it asleep," Inefa reassured her. "You spoke of fire a great deal in your sleep, something Avetho claims is sign of a guilty conscience."

"I didn't start the fire," protested Ragna. "That human did."

"Human?" Inefa raised an eyebrow. "We found no human bodies, only goblins, and no human tracks leading from the devastation. Believe me, we are very good at telling this sort of thing. Would you care to revise your story?" Ragna glared at him.

"I'm no liar," she growled, then moved to the table to pour herself another drink, tapping it. "I thought you elves didn't cut wood? Pretty sure this table isn't alive."

"We don't. Trees *do* die naturally, hard as it may be for you to imagine. When a tree dies, we perform a suitable funeral, then transform its mortal shell into art. It is so much nobler to give its death meaning. How do you imagine we are able to provide ethically-obtained logs for you and your dwarves in our trade?"

"Funeral?" scoffed Ragna. "It's a tree, elf! It's made of wood! You talk like it has a soul."

"You are made of meat," Inefa replied levelly, "yet you claim the distinction for yourself. We give your deaths meaning as well, if we deem it necessary."

"So what's this doing here?" Ragna asked, changing subject. She waved the polished marble jug.

"We trade often with your kind. Are you surprised to find your wares in our homes?" The elf stode to the table and picked up the jug as Ragna drank from her goblet and inspected the engraving. "Ah, the Assaulted Onslaught on the goblins at Monstrousbowels. Two hundred apiece on either side. The Bolt actually lost that battle, but the siege forced the The Evil Thief into a peace treaty by starving the stronghold of meat from its raiders. See here, the depiction of the goblin commander Asno Dustymenaced the Mute Claw being gutted by Rakust Fencemoistened? They always get that wrong. Rakust was using a sword, not an axe."

"How would you know?" challenged Ragna. "Were *you* there?"

"Yes," answered Inefa. "I stood with my blade and my shield in the days before I gave them up and I fought alongside dwarves against a common foe. A year later I fought alongside your leader Bembul Abbeyflashed in the Onslaught of Sharks, when the Searing Crypts struck against the Green Monsters. A friend of mine, Yemeni Gladeglimmers, shot their leader Ngom Handlewitch's right hand, Smunstu."

"I know the tale. Every dwarf knows the tale of General Abbeyflashed, who fought a ten year vendetta with the goblin Ngom Handlewitch the Defective Admiration and was eventually shot in battle at the final attack on Menacelaws, almost a hundred years ago. I know my history."

"Do you? Ngom was an elf, as was Smunstu."

"An elf?" exclaimed Ragna. "Why was an elf leading a goblin nation?"

"A question for another time," said Inefa, indicating the rope ladder. "Now that you are awake and able, you are to be brought before the High Druid for your trial. It will be a journey of two weeks and the sooner we begin, the better." Inefa turned and ascended the rope ladder with surprising grace and speed. Ragna clambered up it after him, asking another question.

"How will this trial work?"

"A Druid informed of the particulars will present a case against you, and a Druid will defend you on your behalf. The High Druid will make a decision as to your guilt and punishment."

"I hope you're the one defending me, then," said Ragna as she pulled herself up through the opening.

"By the Force, no," laughed Inefa. "I'm the prosecution. *Avetho* will be defending you."

Ragna groaned at this piece of news, then looked around as she clambered onto the treehouse roof, a flattened surface of fused branches from which small leaf-covered twigs sprang out. The treehouse stretched up above the layer of foliage, allowing her to see much further about the forest than before. The treetops spread out in all directions, an endless and uninterrupted sea of green that rippled softly in the winds. Almost uninterrupted; a great eyesore presented itself in a swathe of blackened forest to the west. A fair few acres of trees had been destroyed by the fire and looking back, Ragna could see the twinge of pain in Inefa's eye.

"Horrific, isn't it?" he murmured. Ragna felt herself unable to answer, so she changed the topic.

"How do you get the trees to grow like this?" she asked.

"Druidry," Inefa replied shortly, taking off to the west. Ragna looked down and noticed a footbridge made from the familiar fused branches, stretching from their present treehouse to another in the distance. She followed after him, jogging to keep up with his swift pace.

"Which means what, exactly?" she pressed.

"Something that would take years to explain," replied Inefa irritably, still clearly distressed by the sight of the razed forest. "It would be best described as use of the Force to encourage nature to develop in a certain way." Inefa strode from leafy roof to leafy roof across what Ragna was beginning to see as a network of half-concealed walkways spanning the retreat.

"So you can make trees grow differently?" Ragna hopped after him, taking care not to slip on the treacherous walkways; the forest floor was some way down.

"Faster, too. Growth that would take centuries can pass in decades, or years. There are limits. You would consider the time it takes to grow a town such as ours to be unbearably long."

"What limits?"

"Growth such as this can only happen when the Force is sufficient to bear it - too much growth in too little time is harmful to the natural order. In places where the Force is especially strong, such as the heartwoods, much greater growth can be attained if one has the patience to endure centuries. In some places the Force slumbers or is weakened and little can be done. Worse, it may be corrupted." Inefa stopped at a treehouse at the edge of the retreat and reached down, swinging onto a rope ladder Ragna had not even realised was there. He slid down it and Ragna followed hurriedly.

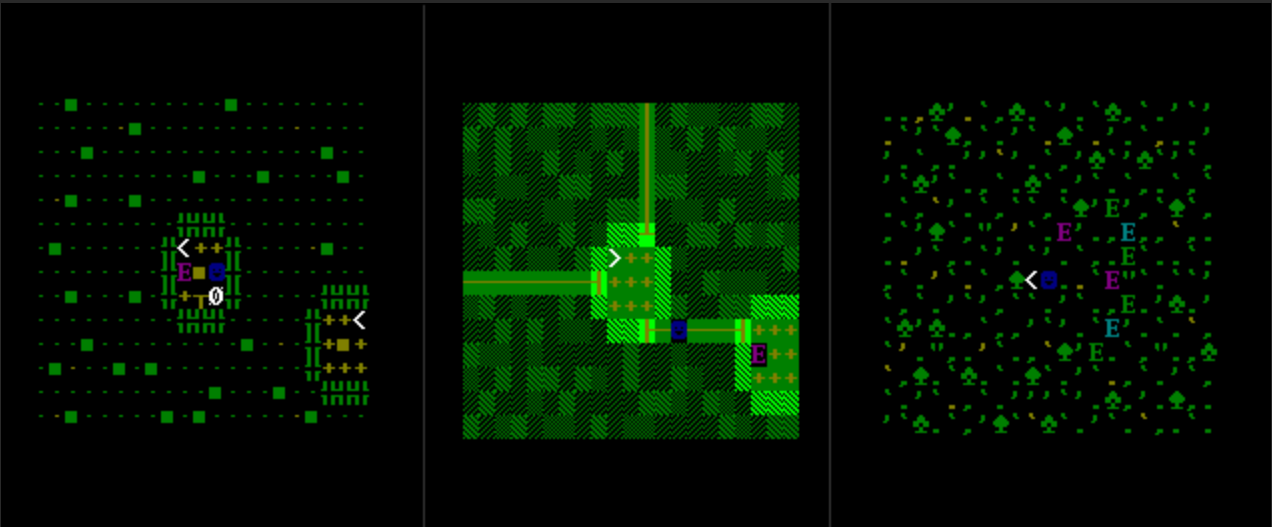
"Corrupted? How?"

"My, aren't you full of questions?" muttered Inefa as he stepped off the rope ladder. "Suffice to say, there is power and ruin in the dark side of the Force. Now, I hope you're ready."

Ragna turned around as she reached the base of the ladder to be greeted by the sight of several Elven rangers, swords at their belts and unstrung longbows at their backs. Despite the fact that they were all garbed in mauve and blue cloaks and tunics, they had somehow managed to arrive without her noticing. Avatho was there, as annoyed by the dwarf's presence as before.

"Where are you taking me?" Ragna asked.

"To the heartwoods," said Inefa. "We go to the tree city of Sealpasses, where you will face judgement for what you have done and the place that the Fin of Saints shall take in this war."



"And there," said Captain Ragna as she finished her gin, "is where I met the Old Elven Master." She stretched and yawned to the disappointment of the listeners. "That, however, is a tale for another time and a fuller mug." Once again there was a chorus of groans and the departure of the gathered crowd, so Ragna stood up to retire for the evening. Somewhere in the background she heard the sound of a dwarf playing a rock musical instrument, followed by spitting and a cry of "You put cement in the damned cupcakes?!", silently thanking Onol for her earlier decision against Mincewind's baking. As the captain moved she just noticed the little figure in the corner that had been paying rapt attention throughout. It wasn't a certain thing, but she fancied the little wretch Stug was watching her with something approaching awe.

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Yeah, no, Metal Miltia. I draw the line at actual plagiarism. ;)

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **May 21, 2009, 02:24:45 pm**

Well, whenever I burn the world and raze the trees I argue that I'm enriching the earth with volcanic minerals and ash from the wood. They never buy it, trust me.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Lord Dullard** on **May 21, 2009, 03:46:23 pm**

Ha! You did a better job imagining Stug than I would have. Most excellent. ;)

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 21, 2009, 03:56:09 pm**

*Ragna's Log*  
2nd Haematite, 353

Little goblin dwarf keeps following me. Thinks I don't notice him ducking behind corners every time I turn to look. Will deal with him later. Ascubis tipped me off about some missing tools in the spawn cavern. Kid's trying to get into the militia, but the mayor already put a veto on that. He's too important as a miner to transfer, but he still tries. Tools were pretty standard; forks, trowels and such. Unless somebody really wants to take up farming as a hobby (and I've no idea where they'd do that out here without someone noticing) they're probably going for the black market. Since this village isn't really big enough to have a black market, that means they're probably going for the human caravan when it next gets in. I'll be watching the trade goods carefully when that happens.

Bit of a funny accident when I was investigating; one of the farmers, a kid called Fora, fell into the decorative pool. Fished her out myself, she mentioned something about having heard whispering behind her and jumped from the fright. Nothing there, but someone must've been playing a prank on her. I issued a general warning about the dangers of water and left it at that.

8th Haematite, 353

Another of those strange iron chests found when digging out the lower burial chambers. Danielle took a rubbing of the bauxite rod they found inside. No other artefacts, but the rod bore a long series of letters in that same archaic font. So far it seems to be gibberish and little more:

Code:   

AOFhiitsSMo1YhEmimuoRestHRRRkHttissugwEapHeofDstrtLEaeDFthraRSnyOt0rCHinDaCEyBLEuCaHET

Emerin has it on display with the other dig site artefacts in her office.

**Vignette: Slash Fiction**  
*12th Haematite, 353*

Loksvig whistled tunelessly as he walked, hefting the heavy bauxite boulder due for gear carving. Trudging through the empty plain with the boulder held up before him, he noticed another whistling sound nearby. He stopped and frowned. There it was again, a single low whistle. He started trudging forward when a third such whistling followed and he felt a tap on the other side of the bauxite. Lowering it, a fourth whistling sound accompanied the iron bolt flying past his face, fired by the marksgoblin and his squad of infantrymen. Loksvig dropped the boulder and ran, shouting "Goblins! Goblins!" at the top of his voice.

Ngosa fired another couple of pot shots at the running dwarf, cackling at his little fat form waddling away. She narrowed her eyes and knelt down into a proper firing position as a leather tunicked dwarf in a silk frock coat and tricorne hat rounded the corner of the village's chalk wall brandishing a sabre and a wicked grin. Ngosa clicked her fingers and gestured, prompting the others to go for the dwarf; slave fighters in front, speargoblins behind. She took aim and fired.

Jora grinned ear to ear when she saw the goblins. Weeks of training with Ragna had afforded her far greater agility than before, getting her to the fight well ahead of the other militiadwarves. Brandishing her sabre she hurtled towards the goblins as bolts streamed past her, clattering into the wall. She ran past the first slave goblin, slashing him in the arm and prompting a cry of pain, then spun around on her heel and slashed his other arm for good measure. She flipped the blade up as another bolt flew between their faces and brought it down in a crimson arc, slicing off his left leg. Behind her the second slave leapt forward and grabbed her bodily by the shoulders. Jora grabbed the sabre in both hands and thrust it backwards under her arm, the blade passing cleanly through the goblin's chest and splitting his heart in twain. She tugged the weapon free in a burst of spraying blood and the goblin staggered back as his life poured freely onto the ground. He slumped backwards and lay quite still, shallow breathing as the world turned grey around him. Jora brought her sword back to shatter the arms of the first goblin, then brought her blade down heavily, kneeling as a bolt whistled through the air above her hat. As a final insult she brought the blade up and stabbed it back down into the goblin's gut, twisting it for the kill. Jora stood, drawing the blade out in a scarlet flicker and prepared to face the two speargoblins.

Jora stepped into the stroke as the first speargoblin drove his point at her, side-stepping it and breaking the wooden haft with her free hand. Her sabre flicked forward, slashing his leg and driving him backwards into his companion. The goblin raised a hand to stop her and the swashbuckler cut it off with a psychotic laugh, spinning and bringing the iron sabre around in a terricle arc, slicing through the craven creature's guts and into the speargoblin using him as a shield. The blade ripped through the muscles in the soldier's arm, forcing him to drop his weapon and nearly getting struck as another of the marksgoblin's iron bolts hurtled past. Jora stepped forward again, jamming the sword through the speargoblin's weapon hand, then adjusting her grip on the hilt and driving it down through the goblin's leg like a dagger. As the unfortunate creature cried out in agony she ripped the blade out, spraying his face with his own blood, and brought it back down again to sever his thigh. The speargoblin collapsed, succumbing to the pain and limb loss. Jora glanced backward to see Khain arriving on the scene, spear pointed at the dying goblin with the broken heart.

"Leave it!" Jhora yelled back to him. "It's dead anyway! Get the marksman!"



Ngosa watched with mounting dread as the sabre-wielding horror swept her blade around her and down, lifting the speargoblin's remaining body up and into the air in a masterful stroke, then ran without a breath of hesitation for Ngosa. The marksgoblin reached for her quiver to find a single bolt left in it and cursed furiously. Loading it into the bow she ran full pelt towards the swashbuckler, intent on making the one shot count.

The speargoblin's body launched through the air, spraying a crimson trail until it crashed into a mangled heap upon the ground. It quivered, then shuddered and grew still as Broose's single steel bolt thudded into its gut. The desperate marksman ran towards the dwarven warriors with her crossbow held like a club, watching Jora run past her with some surprise, then feeling the sabre stab through her arm with even more surprise. In a desperate effort, she shot the last bolt in her bow straight at Jora's head, who ducked into a defensive roll as it whistled through her hair. As she rolled past, her blade flicked out like the tongue of a snake, neatly severing the forearm that held the bow. The goblin staggered, screaming and holding her bloody stump in shock as Jora rolled into stance and brought the blade across her other hand. Khain drove his spear through the creature's torso from navel to neck, holding it aloft in the air until its weight brought it crashing back down.

Ngosa felt pain, revulsion and horror curdling throughout the shattered remnants of her body as she slid off the heavy ashen staff of the spear. She looked into the face of her killer, a young black-bearded dwarf with a fresh expression. The point of the spear grew closer, then everything splintered to grey.

Khain wrenched the spear from the goblin's eye and rested for a moment on it. He looked up at Jora's bloodied visage and her dripping scarlet blade.

"And you say *we're* kill stealers?"

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Keita** on **May 21, 2009, 04:05:37 pm**

I'd like to ask for a drum kit!

awesome story by th way, I'm hitting F5 like there's no tomorrow

also can I request (seriously this time) for a staff with blades at either end, it's a long time since I did Bo Ki Yokot and I've forgotten the name of it.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 21, 2009, 05:05:58 pm**

I don't think there's really a weapon like that in the DF raws (and Jora's sabre is really a scimitar), but I can say that your spear is double-bladed if you really want. I'm not especially fond of double-sword type affairs because of how ridiculously dangerous they are to the wielder (and generally impractical), but a double-ended spear I can do.

I've added Vigdis in with the profession 'Rock Troubadour'. I wanted to make her male, but only female Nakasians were available and deity choice is rather more compelling given her role. She and other as-yet unwritten in characters will appear in posts in the near future.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Rysith** on **May 21, 2009, 05:22:13 pm**

Quote from: Iituem on May 21, 2009, 03:56:09 pm

Khain wrenched the spear from the goblin's eye and rested for a moment on it. He looked up at Jora's bloodied visage and her dripping scarlet blade.

"And you say *we're* kill stealers?"

Hahaha, it's not kill stealing if I kill everything before you get there! You can't hope for glory if you don't run for it!

Great story, really enjoy reading it, especially the ASCII-draw enhanced backstory.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **May 21, 2009, 05:29:25 pm**

*Ragna's Log*

Stug is still following me around. Growing up outside the Mountainhomes, he seems to respect strength as the only qualification of leadership needed. My stories only seemed to have only encouraged this following. I have no idea why i let him into the Guard. Oh well, he may turn out to be a capable fighter.

-----

Militia shows great improvement, particularly Jora. She still showboats too much, but at least she can kill effectively now. Must work on squad tactics though; most of them split up and charge individually, which is good against small groups, but even in this isolated location, soldiers should still know how to fight on a battlefield, as part of a larger army.

Khane has been asking for a double bladed spear for a while now. Against my better judgment, I gave him one. Here's hoping he doesn't stab himself in the foot with it. At least its better than some of the other dual-bladed weapons ive seen; it has a distinct advantage over them in that you can actually use it effectively.

-----

Still surprises me how many remember the Old Masters. They seem to have passed into legend for those that remember them in the Homes, and those that do remember are nearing the ends of their days. Still, telling the stories of my past, especially when I had to explain about the Force to the younger dwarves, has got me thinking. I can still sense it, though not well, and I worry about what I feel here. There seems to be a darker edge than normal to it around here...

-----

Blargh, my writing is horrible compared to your's. I made a few small assumptions when writing the log: first, that Stug is in the Fortress Guard, and second, that Ragna can sense (weakly) the Force, but can't control it as the elves do. Maybe my clumsy writing will give you a plot point or something.

Keep up the good work!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **May 21, 2009, 06:03:43 pm**



wow nice good as it will ever be maybe later on it will be better but still very good :D

journal:.  
...so they still wont let me be in the militia....they say i am better as a miner. well that may be true i still want to do something better with my dwarven life. i will continue to try and become part of the army but i will also work on my mining. well i hope i get some major mining plans where i can reveal my true talent for mining. and maybe when we get to many miners... i might be able to join the militia.. but until then i will work on mining while not give up on my military plans..... Stug seems ...abnormally attached to ragna. i wonder how she is dealing with him. the storys of ragna's about elven masters is fasinating. maybe after some more mining i could try out some metalsmithing or weapon forging. i never tried it before but i fear for my thumbs.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 21, 2009, 07:01:43 pm**

*Emerin's Log*  
15th Haematite, 353

The outer walls of the Nishan chapel are complete, the whole construction a rather bemusing mosaic of yellow and blue tiles. Kulet seems to believe this rather gaudy display demonstrates wealth, though many dwarves have welcomed the bright respite from the endless white and red of the chalk plains and desert sands. The trade depot has been moved there, rebuilt in orthoclase and just in time for the human merchants to arrive. They come with a donkey, camel and two wagons. Ibon appears to still be the Guild's representative to the west, I've welcomed her to use my new quarters until the trading is finished.

*Ragna's Log*  
17th Haematite, 353

At Urnriddles' request and Emerin's insistence a re-election was performed to include the votes of his migrants. The gesture ensured that Emerin was voted in freshly for a full new year. In other news, a goblin thief who has been tentatively identified as Ago was caught in one of Fath's pit traps. Unsure what else to do with him, he has been locked in a cage and is being kept with the animals and fed on scraps. The young troublemaker Stug has taken to hanging around the creature; I had expected a bad turn to come of this, but Stug was the first to suggest killing the thief outright.

Been watching the trade goods hauled in, checking all the stuff in barrels. No sign of those missing tools. While I was there some idiot fell off the scaffolding on the upper level apartment expansions, got himself a broken arm.

*Danielle's Inventory*  
24th Haematite, 353

After trading with the Gibdan merchants, we have obtained 47 logs of wood, a few bricks of pearlash, a vast quantity of liquor (well over 200 gallons), barrels (including a couple of lye barrels) and many bins of cloth and leather. Urgash insisted on the lye for soapwork, apparently a childhood passion of his. He was expressed a desire to eventually pass on all of his various duties to apprentices and take up the dogherding business full-time, producing soap as an aside.

*26th Haematite, 353*

"I've been robbed!" exclaimed Emerin, barging into Danielle's office. The savant ticked off a couple of boxes on the report slate in front of her and calmly placed it into the 'Out' box on her desk before looking up. With a mechanical squeak a pair of arms on the 'In' box lifted the next slate and placed it down on the desk.

"Have you?" asked Danielle. "What was taken?"

"My gems," said Emerin. "An amulet, too, from the chest in my rooms."

"Really?" said Danielle, a puzzled expression forming. "I have no record of you owning any gems, or an amulet. Perhaps you meant one from the stockpile, except-" Here she reached for a slate behind her and placed it on the desk. "-it would appear there is no record of any gone missing from the stockpiles. Should I send for one of the haulers to take a stock check?"

"Ah, no, that won't be necessary," backpedalled Emerin quickly.

"If you say so, though I'm not sure what sort of legal recourse you can take to a set of stolen jewels that you have no receipts for, are not in our stockpile records and by all accounts do not exist." Emerin flushed, prompting a charitable smile from Danielle.

"Perhaps," the savant suggested, "you might mention this to the captain anyway, just so she can be on the lookout for any *non*-hypothetical thefts."

"Perhaps," muttered Emerin, glancing darkly at the offending stock report in front of Danielle.

"Still, at least you can relax now," said the book-keeper.

"How do you figure that?"

"Well, it isn't as if you had any other caches that might've been stolen, is it?"

Danielle tried her very hardest to suppress a laugh as Emerin blanched and practically ran from the office. She reached for a handful of firecaps from the bowl on her desk and set about her business as she ate.

-----

Nearly all good, though Stug is at this stage just following Ragna around. He's not in the military yet. I wasn't sure about Ragna and the Force (how you'd feel about that), but I'll take that as a go ahead to explore that further.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **May 21, 2009, 09:35:13 pm**

Emerin gets a lot of time featured in the story, so I don't really need to write journal entries for her, but I want to anyway.

*Emerin's Log*

My star rubies! Some... some *thief!!* Some petty thief stole them! Never in my many years as a... redistributor of precious jewels did I ever get star rubies! This is highly distressing. I looked all over my office, I looked all over my dining room, and I looked all over my bedroom. They were nowhere to be found!

I asked Danielle if she knew where they were, because she knows where everything is. That was a mistake. They weren't on her records she said, so they must have never existed, so they couldn't possibly have been stolen. Unless they were stolen in the first place.

Believe you me, the irony of a former jewel thief becoming a noble and losing her own jewels to theft is not lost on me, nor was it on Danielle, who merely sat there relishing the entire situation with a smug look on her face. Danielle is very helpful to the settlement, but *dammit*, I wish she wasn't so good at her job.

Maybe she needs a situation of her own loaded with irony. I think I'll hire somebody to harass her about starting a glowcap based economy.

I've been reelected mayor, somehow. It seems my attempts at finding a replacement by instituting democratic policies are being misinterpreted as genuine and gracious efforts on behalf of the people to keep the position of mayor truly democratic. I am unfortunately gifted at politics.

Though if I had to take a guess at who is masterminding the political scene, that would easily be Frey. He's been my unofficial adviser since this fort began, and he's also 'campaigned' on my behalf for the position of mayor. I've wondered what his reasons were, but they elude me. I hope I'm not just his puppet.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Kel the Oblivious** on **May 21, 2009, 11:16:14 pm**

Written in a deep blue ink on a pure white slab of chalk

*Journal of Kel Ragebrew*

*I had the dream again. I do not know how many times I have had it, but I know my flight from the swamp only contained them. How long has it been since I fled my home? I know it has been more then a year, but past that I can not recall. Each night, that dream. No matter. Those demons will never find me. They can keep rotting in their thrice cursed swamp, with all their delicious, mind opening plants.*

*(A small image of a plant, it's stock bent at angles and it's flowers looking like razor blades. A single fruit hung just below the flower. The ink turns to crimson, detailing the fruit in remarkable clarity.)*

*So I gave a pint of Bog Water to the farmer lass, Fora, I do believe. It had the expected results. Paranoia and whispers in her ears. I just wish she hadn't leapt into the pool. If no one had fished her out, her death would lie heavily on my mind. But as she did not, I shall see what the result of Blood Ink is. The goblins who attempted to attack provided me with more then enough blood. Amazing how well a narrow iron boot holds fluid. (A few blots of red cover the next few words) Oops, transfer error to the still. Have to let the blood start to thicken before adding it, otherwise it just tastes wrong. Then again, only I have tried it... Maybe it will taste better if I pour it in fresh?*

*Also, I will have to be there first when one of our stalwart defenders falls. I have never attempted this drink with actual dwarven blood, and I doubt anyone would look too kindly on me taking it from the living. I know it is... a touch morbid, but I can only imagine the properties that dwarven blood would add to the drink. Even if it is only a thimble, the slightest ingredient can have the most profound effect... As I am finding while eating this roast. I just downed the last of my Bog Water to kill the fire in my mouth.*

Putting down the simple twig he had been using for writing, and the small glass vial of watered down blue dye he used, the medicine dwarf rose from his bunk, looking around to the other sleeping forms. He slid out of bed, ignoring his heavy leather boots and just walking out bare footed.

Kel moved silently through the night, carrying with him his second journal entry. Since he did not like the prospect of his fellow luckless bastards finding out he had been experimenting with his brews on the thristy. He had buried the first one not too far from the southern wall. He so loved running his hands through the red sand as he dug a small hole. The color of the setting sun, made up of countless gems. He would sit on the ground there, picking up handfuls and let them trickle between his calloused, scarred hands. The price for learning how to pick blackberries.

For a few hours he would sit there, under the night sky, letting the sand trickle out one handful at a time till he revealed his first entry. Safe in the knowledge that anyone who saw him would just think he liked playing in sand a bit too much. He eased it into the hole, and began to cover it back up. He returned to his bunk silent again, and slid back into it, praying to Zas Coppercolored the Blueness of Dye that his dreams would not be haunted. The pint of Bog Water might have been a bad idea....

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Keita** on **May 22, 2009, 02:23:30 am**

Quote from: Iituem on May 21, 2009, 05:05:58 pm

I don't think there's really a weapon like that in the DF raws (and Jora's sabre is really a scimitar), but I can say that your spear is double-bladed if you really want. I'm not especially fond of double-sword type affairs because of how ridiculously dangerous they are to the wielder (and generally impractical), but a double-ended spear I can do.

yer you've just about got everything right. It is really just for story purposes and it take about a 6 months training with a Bo (think wooden Quater staff but lighter and slightly longer) before you're allowed to handle a proper one, mostly slashing and complicated spinging moves, gonna have to take it up again was goodd fun.

Anyway on topic thanks!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 22, 2009, 03:03:55 am**

*"I want more."*

*"There is no more."*

*"I planted you the seeds, coaxed tghose dark, dank plants to grow! There must be more! We need more!"*

*"We?"*

*"The jewelled shrine, the sign of the divine. I had to let others see it."*

*"...How many others?"*

*"We must dream again!"*

*Ragna's Log*  
2nd Malachite, 353

Mayor passed me a tip-off about some stolen jewels. That is, re-stolen jewels. I gather Emerin probably mined them out herself and never bothered to tell Danielle she had them. Shall keep a note of that for the future in case I need any favours.

This on the back of the tools being nicked; we have a thief in the village. Actually as I understand it we have *many* thieves in the village,

what with half the population being ex-cons, but as of this moment we have a thief who has the beard to keep nicking things on my watch. Thus far it's been things like firecaps and half-inching someone else's blanket, petty stuff that can be sorted out with a quick clap behind the ear and a stiff talking-to. These jewels raise the bar, though. If someone nicks jewellery it's because they think they can pass it off somewhere it won't be noticed. Doable in a city but in a small place you need to get it out of town.

I'm a bit leary of watching the damned trading post again. Apparently there was another serious accident besides the idiot falling off the scaffolding that I missed when staking out the damned depot. Fellow grabbed a spare mining pick from the stores and tried to defend himself against something that wasn't there, ended up putting the pick through his leg. We've got another fellow laid up for months now. What in Onol's name is causing people to act like madmen?

5th Malachite, 353

Funny story. Yngwie finally gets the ironworks up and running, smelts those goblets Emerin mandated to get it going. Turns out the human merchants made her a good deal on iron short swords, so the Mayor's gone and barred us from selling said goblets until after the next human caravan to encourage more diverse production. I don't understand this economics business, but apparently that firecap girl Danielle says it'll work. Meanwhile, that madman Fath is wasting all the wood recently bought from the caravan on trying to get some manner of wind farm going. Apparently Danielle's pressuring him not to 'ruin the natural lay of the land', but frankly a sea of mills is rather more an eyesore in my opinion.

Investigated the homes of the accident victims. Found a wineskin in one of them with a bit of liquor left in. Didn't smell like any of the imported stuff. Two of the three accidents so far look to be Zassians, based on the little quartz idols in their belongings. Don't recognise it.

8th Malachite, 353

Ascubis volunteered to test a bit of the mystery drink. Said it tasted a bit weird and had a strong kick, very herbal. Night after, had all sorts of weird dreams. Says he doesn't remember much, except for there being a cavern and maybe some jewels. I'm recommending the Mayor this stuff goes contraband until we figure out what it is and where it's coming from. We don't need some lunatic drink making people see things.

12th Malachite, 353

*"And the rain it raineth every day,"* came the soft song from above the workshops. Captain Ragna frowned as she passed.

"Who goes there?" she called up to the roofs. A lilting, lyrical voice answered from up above.

*"Why madonna, but a simple singer,  
And her life is but a simple thing. Her  
Belly to be full is what she'll desire,  
Her heart filled with passion and free of ire."*

"Show yourself," demanded the captain. A dwarf swung her legs over the edge of the roof, peered down and grinned.

Her hair was long and greasy, dyed glumcap black save for thick strands dyed bright blue, red and occasionally her natural blonde. A white mask of chalk was painted over her face, eyes and lips highlighted in black pigment. The look was polished off with a dark leather jacket, boots and mismatching threadmoss pants. An iron harmonica rested in one hand.

*"I see the shade of a milit'ry dwarf,  
Spent a hundred years in a midnight wharf,  
Haunted by the past; a well-trodden road,  
Her fate thrice cursed by a blood-covered toad."*

"Wait," protested Ragna. "How do you know about-"

*"Divinity and darkness; equal parts,  
They seek vision in drink and not their hearts,  
Guide them it will and lead them all astray,  
For where the nightmare stops? I cannot say."*

"Dreams and darkness? What manner of nonsense is this, fool?" demanded the captain, frustrated by the strange troubadour. "Is this about the contraband? Speak sense!"

*"You tarry too long - your duty awaits.  
Go; stop a goblin deciding his fate!  
The errant-born child prevails with a knife,  
I say you - begone! Save the wretch's life!"*

Ragna turned at the sound of shouting from the animal cages, then glanced up again. The dwarf had vanished but the shouting continued, so she ran full pelt toward them. She arrived to find Stug being held back by another dwarf as he struggled with a knife to kill the goblin in the cage. Stug elbowed the dwarf in the face and brought the knife up again just in time for Ragna to grab his wrist and twist it until he let go of the blade. Ragna lifted the cretinous dwarf up by the wrist and yelled at him.

"What the hell are you doing?" she demanded. Stug barked his response in halting dwarfish.

"Want. Death."

"I don't care how much you want to kill him! You do not murder an unarmed prisoner!"

"Why?" Stug asked.

"Mercy!" snapped Ragna. "Compassion, honour, justice!" Stug just looked at her as if these were completely unfamiliar terms. He pointed at the goblin in the cage, who appeared to be laughing at some sort of personal joke, repeating his earlier statement.

"Want. Death."

"I told you, it doesn't matter how much you want-" Stug shook his head vigorously.

"He. Want. Death," Stug explained. "Want free." The reasoning dawned upon Ragna, who found herself perplexed by an entirely different question.

"Why?" she asked. Stug seemed to struggle for a word before eventually setting on one.

"Love."

omg so good.

I always enjoy the way you portray the elves and goblins, letting us glimpse into a completely different culture than the dwarven (and human, obviously) one we all know.

+ finally ironworks -> Yngwie can start getting busy honing her craft: but really, it would be a lot easier making statues if dwarven faces were perfectly symmetrical. It doesn't help any that they move all the time, either, does it?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Keita** on **May 22, 2009, 04:06:50 am**

from the jornal of Khain:  
Finaly! a bladed staff! it is like other weapons yet not, you can slash and pierce with it, and the craftsmanship is excelent, I would have wanted to have had a wooden pole instead of iron for it to be lighter, but wood is in dire supply so I shal make do. I most practice with this new weapon, for I have shapened the blades to a fine edge and I'm ceartain, positive in fact that I can slice through a gobbo in one hit!

Next time there is a raid, I'll be ready. I **will** be in the fight while theres still some goblins left instead of cleaning up after Jora.

this is very well written and portrayed amasingly, I agree with the comment about the culture, your very good at this Iituem

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 22, 2009, 04:44:06 am**

A bit of a note regarding everyone who downplays their own writing, btw. My writing is still sub-par to Heavy Flak's, and miles below that in the 'Birth of an Artefact' story. Use the writings of others to inspire you, but judge your own writing on its own merits.

They say it takes ten years to achieve Mastery in any subject (15 for Legendary?). I'm currently at [no title] skill, and I've actually committed myself to writing for about 4 months now. It takes 1 month of committed writing to hit Novice. I think you get to Competent after a year? Uncertain.

The only way to improve on your writing is to keep writing and to keep experimenting when you do it. You will cock up often, but those are lessons from which you learn how to do things and (rather importantly) how *not* to do things. I still have weak characterisation and there are synactic issues that bug me with my style; this story is aimed at helping me deal with unexpected events and incorporate them into a narrative (though it interferes with the novelistic aim of long-term planning and overall story architecture). Tis fiction on the fly, with nary a redraft.

There is no such thing as talent. Remember this. All success is 7/10ths preparation, 2/10ths skill and 1/10th luck. It doesn't matter how much innate ability you have, it pales compared to the effect of skill. If you want to improve, pick *one* problem area you have (maintaining plots, developing characters, even something as simple as correct spelling and grammar) and work at it until you're satisfied. Don't worry about anything else you think you need work on, or it'll distract you. Just get the one thing *right* and you can move onto the next one.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Keita** on **May 22, 2009, 05:44:34 am**

talking of insperation Iituem, you *have* inspired me to write and I'm about to type it up, just need a title...

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Rysith** on **May 22, 2009, 01:43:01 pm**

Quote from: Iituem on May 22, 2009, 04:44:06 am  
The only way to improve on your writing is to keep writing and to keep experimenting when you do it. You will cock up often, but those are lessons from which you learn how to do things and (rather importantly) how *not* to do things. I still have weak characterisation and there are synactic issues that bug me with my style; this story is aimed at helping me deal with unexpected events and incorporate them into a narrative (though it interferes with the novelistic aim of long-term planning and overall story architecture). Tis fiction on the fly, with nary a redraft.

Yep, Lanternwebs has definitely taught me that much, and I can see the improvement in my writing wandering back to the beginning. I'm trying to come up with some journal entries for Jora, but haven't really settled on a voice for her yet.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Kel the Oblivious** on **May 22, 2009, 03:48:58 pm**

As I have learned, even a competent crafter can produce masterwork goods once in a great while. Do not cut yourself short. You might not be as long as the others. This is stil very enthralling, and I make sure to check this every time I get some time online.

P.S. Oh dear... I am making a cult of nightmare seeking zealots to the goddess of revelry. Should I take this to my advantage, or attempt to try and reverse the damage I have done? \*Sits down and ponders this\*

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Enzo** on **May 22, 2009, 05:32:42 pm**

I have to say, after having fallen a few pages behind and catching up today, you shouldn't downplay your own writing either Iituem. The thing that struck me today was that I don't know who my favourite character is anymore. In the good way. Urgash seems quite content to settle down and stay in the background, which is fine cause it seems to suit him. But the starting seven (possibly minus Frey, the heroic mute), Yngwie, Stug, Ragna, Jora, even Datan the Trader are all fun and totally awesome characters already. Probably more I forgot. You say you're bad at characterization but it's no secret that characterization is *hard*, especially when you're dealing with so many and trying to give them equalish treatment.

Makes me really want to do something like this too, but life intervenes, and there seem to be a lot of community forts going on already. Oh well, I'll just write an Urgash journal later on...

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **May 22, 2009, 06:08:18 pm**

journal....  
the dreams oh GOD THE DREAMS!!!!!!.. never do i want that stuff again. though i can't remember much it is still there haunting me the bare cavern...and the jewels. i can;t remember i must forget!!!!!!!!!! i can barely get to sleep at night and with the racket stug is making over the goblin. let the thing go out naked just to end the noise. i must get back to work.....\*end journal\*

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Kel the Oblivious** on **May 23, 2009, 03:42:27 am**



Another thinly cut slab of chalk, covered in strange symbols, seemingly warped pictures of plants, and thin spidery script covering the empty spaces in rich blue ink.

Journal of Kel Ragebrew

*This is most interesting. The drink seems to have a more potent effect on those who sample it then upon myself. Maybe I have filled my belly with these demonic brews enough times that my mind finds the horrors hidden in my own shadow common place and nothing to worry about, or is it merely the fact I know better? I can not be certain. I know my fellow dwarves are less grounded in reality then myself. Believing that a goddess divinely bestowed a random worker into an incredible feat of art? Possible, but I think she just got a really good idea and it refused to go away, like a tune that gets stuck in your head, or that dirty limrick about a duke's consort and a sauage maker. Took me half a year to forget the words, a full year to purge the image.*

*The Blood Ink has finally brewed. As expected, goblin blood acts the same as deer, goat, pig and cow blood. The thick red blobs floating in a pale yellow brew, truly do it's name justice. I wonder how they stay the same spherical shape, even after been poured into and out of a water skin, only to burst and fill the mouth with such a wonderful copper and cinnamon flavor once it passes the lips, linger on the back of it for so long. Next I need to get the ingredients for my name sake, Rage Brew. I will need the blood of a savage beast for this one, so I imagine I will be waiting some time before I can. The rest should be easy enough. If I get firecap extract, it should suffice for the flame crystal powder I used before. Oh how that angered the Mayor back home. Finds a nice vein of them, only to have half go missing. I \*MUST\* keep that out of the hands of my little gathering of addicts.....*

*So as I sip upon my lastest creation, I am left here with an inner turmoil. Do I give these cultists their brew, and line my pockets... Or report myself to the authorities and see what mercy I can be given. Of course the first one is more favorable, in the short term. But if the entire village became full of gibber maddwarves chasing after their own shadows and attacking those of others.... I doubt I would see anything past the short term. I will still brew what I can from the plants Fora grew for me. It would be a waste not to. Thankfully she does not know how long it takes me to brew up the Bog Water. It only takes a few days for the vital essence to drain out. The rest is just to let the flavor seep in as well.*

With a long sigh, Kel put down the stone slab, slipping out from behind the beerhall and walking off to his stash hole, neatly digging it out, putting it tablet ontop of the other two, and playing a piece of oiled leather over it, so in the off chance it rained, the water would not touch his diary slabs. He only hoped that damned fox minded clerk didn't notice one piece missing. Oh well, if she did, how could the fire cap for brains know it was him? With a shrug, he covered it fully, patting it down and lying on it, staring up to the clear sky. The ragged dwarf passed out, sleeping on still warm red sand. If only he could get a bed made out of it....

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **May 23, 2009, 03:57:41 am**

Quote from: Kel the Oblivious on May 23, 2009, 03:42:27 am  
...or that dirty limrick about a duke's consort and a sauage maker.

You have to tell us what this limerick is.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Aldaris** on **May 23, 2009, 04:17:25 am**

I see you read YAFGC, Kel. But you made a slight mistake, it took 2 years, not one to purge the mental imagery. Still a nice use of the quote, the story is looking grand so far.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Kel the Oblivious** on **May 23, 2009, 04:26:27 am**

Yes, I indeed do love that comic. But I didn't want to do full blown plagorism, or however you spell it. Plus, I have the added perk of so many drinks that I forget all the quicker :D

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Aldaris** on **May 23, 2009, 04:50:49 am**

Quote from: Kel the Oblivious on May 23, 2009, 04:26:27 am  
Yes, I indeed do love that comic. But I didn't want to do full blown plagorism, or however you spell it. Plus, I have the added perk of so many drinks that I forget all the quicker :D

Ah, the Power Of Booze. Good argument.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 23, 2009, 07:33:36 am**

Ragna's Log  
18th Malachite, 353

Another rod found at the burial chambers, again in a sealed iron chest. No other relics, once again took a rubbing of the characters on the side.

Code: [Select]  
rtAtncYAYEsetTtAdEdwdveuSeoAEGasHaeohe1hetpRFneEUaintrsohSietiogU0suiTSatLEHmaeVsunTMI

Stug has taken to playing this sort of game involving a series of traced rings and pebbles with the goblin captive. The goblin refuses to speak to anyone else and barely communicates with the little cretin, but we can neither torture him nor stop feeding him without breaking dwarven laws on treatment of prisoners. Not to mention it being outright cruel. Nobody seems willing to sentence him to death yet and if we release him he'll probably just go tell his masters where we are and how much we have to steal. Still puzzling over what Stug could possibly mean by 'love' for the goblin. They treat each other quite harshly, as far as I can tell.

Also puzzling over that troubadour. I've seen her singing for firecaps, or playing a sort of guitar made from obsidian (as absurdly heavy as that must be). She always manages to find a way to vanish whenever I get close enough to question her.

26th Malachite, 353

Jora stared up in wonder at the shimmering vault around her for time she could not measure. Emerald light shone down from an unseen source and the gemstones sang with hidden voices. She could make out faint details; a glistening altar, bright candles on translucent staves, a richly-cowled figure on a platform. She moved closer to the elusive figure, trying to see detail through the blinding light or hear the strangely garbled words it spoke. She reached out with a wavering hand to the violet robes, then froze. Beneath her, deep beneath her, she heard the scrabbing in the rock.

Jora breathed in sharply, forcing open her eyes. She looked around quickly; nobody else was awake yet and the moon still cast its soft rays through the half-finished walls of the apartment. No more than an hour could have passed. Sparing a glance for the other dwarves



lying prone and still embroiled in dreams of divinity, she picked up her coat and shuffled out of the room.

13th Galena, 353

"So I call this meeting to, uh, order," said Emerin, tapping the table with the three-titan mural that had begun to serve as a sort of unofficial marker. She still felt embarassed about the whole ideal.

A few chairs had been dragged into the Mayoral office, hedged around the desk to form an impromptu meeting room. Gathered around it were Emerin, Frey, Broose, Ragna, Danielle, Fath, Karana and Kulet. Emerin made a note to order a proper meeting hall arranged for future occasions.

"Main order of business," read Danielle from a slate, "the state of construction work within the village."

"Is this absolutely necessary?" muttered Broose. "We could have done this whole thing in conversations without having to drag us all here and make us sit through an official meeting."

"Things need to be noted," replied Danielle primly. "This way I have an accurate record of everything going on within the village. Now I understand the Nishan chapel flooring and walls are finished, Kulet? Do you have the funds for the remaining roof work?"

"I am afraid," said Kulet smoothly, "that my congregation is still working on accumulating the funds for this work."

"Your *congregation*?" scoffed Broose.

"I have taken to providing guidance and sermons," answered Kulet. "I note no objections were raised when Karana began leading the Nakasians." Karana remained silent.

"Then I am afraid construction will have to be delayed," said Danielle. "The village cannot afford to sponsor the full costs of the chapel's completion at this time. Unless you can find another source of donations, we will have to use what funds we have to pursue other construction work, such as the ongoing power production effort."

"Ah about that, lassie," coughed Fath. "It's nae workin'. Wi' the limited area provided and all the additional construction costs, it'd be much cheaper and make a lot more sense to use a water system as originally suggested. I'm sorry, Dani." Danielle gave him a long look before nodding.

"Very well," she agreed. "Funds will be transferred to work on a water power project."

"The Nakasian body has sufficient 'caps to fund the Nishan chapel's completion in its entirety," interjected Karana. "It would make little sense for us to donate it, but we are willing to offer it as an exchange."

"What for?" asked Emerin.

"The land directly above the spawn plots. The site of the current blockworks, though we have no desire to interrupt its function at this time."

"You are asking for land?"

"Is it an unreasonable request? To date all land within the village has belonged to the state, so to speak. Private ownership is a long-held tradition amongst dwarves. It is not as if we are demanding the land be provided for free, simply to purchase it at a fair price."

"What would you do with this land?" asked Frey.

"Develop it in time," answered Karana. "It may be that the shrine may require expansion, or that we find it necessary to provide storage space for crops and produce. Again, none of these are unreasonable requests."

"If we do this," said Frey to Emerin, "it opens the floodgates to land purchase from any dwarf, so long as they can meet the price."

"It would provide much-needed revenue for other work," argued Danielle. "We could use the 'caps." Emerin considered, looking to Ragna for her thoughts.

"So long," said the captain, "as all are answerable to justice, I have no issue with the matter. With the recent thefts and the increasing need for new guardsmen, I could use a proper set of cells."

"Very well," decided Emerin, tapping the mural on the desk for good measure. "The sale of property will be legalised. Karana, Danielle will meet with you separately to discuss pricing on the land you request. Kulet, the government will fund the completion of the chapel and your 'church' will be held indebted to us for the amount owed. I assure you that you *will* repay it in a timely manner, as Danielle shall see that it accrued interest otherwise."

A general chorus of agreement, begrudging or otherwise, came from the table.

"Very well," said Danielle. "Next order of business..."

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **May 23, 2009, 02:09:25 pm**

I have a funny feeling those random strings of characters are cryptograms in disguise.

Code:

AOFhiitsSMoLYhEmimuoRestHRRrkHttissugwEapHeofDstrtLEaedFthraRSnyOtOrCHinDaCEyBLEuCaHET  
rtAtncYAYEsetTtAdEdwdveuSeoAEGasHaeohelhetpRFneEUaintsrsohSietiogU0suiTSatLEHmaeVsunTMI

Same number of characters, same style. Yep, definitely cryptograms. Sadly, I'm totally lost when it comes to deciphering any sort of coded message.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 23, 2009, 07:37:03 pm**

25th Galena, 353

"What in Onol's tin beard did you think you were doing?!" roared Ragna, thrusting the cretinous figure of Stug up against the wall. Stug sulked and glared at the captain.

"Had something wanted," croaked the goblin-raised dwarf. "Took."

"You beat him senseless over a loaf of bread!"

"Didn't want give. Took."

"You can't do that!" berated the captain.

"Can," said Stug, wiggling his bloodied knuckles with a slightly confused expression. That he could was pretty self-evident.

"Well you shouldn't!"

"Why not? Stronger. Cannot stop. Is right."

"What? No it isn't! How is it right to take from those weaker than you?" Stug frowned at the question, as if the answer were obvious.

"Too weak to keep, too weak to defend. If not take, other will, grow stronger, take from me. Strong must rule."

"Dominance isn't just defined by strength, Stug," growled Ragna, exasperated. "There are considerations! Compassion. Wisdom. Justice. It just doesn't work like that."

"Does. Weak die. Strong live. What matter justice to dead?"

"It matters to the living," explained Ragna, lowering Stug to the ground. "There has to be redress, law and justice for society to work, Stug. These are the cornerstone of civilisation, of what it means to be a dwarf. The strong have a duty to protect the weak, not only their bodies but their dignities and rights."

"Not understand," grunted Stug. "Teach."

"You want me to- Fine, okay. You want to learn justice, you can do it on the job. I can't believe I'm doing this, but you're sticking by my side until I can figure out what to do with you. I can't just keep beating you up, all it does is reinforce this belief you have in strength being everything. Will you accept that?" Stug stared at her for a moment.

"Will obey," he said.

"Well," sighed the captain, "that will have to do for now."

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Lord Dullard** on **May 23, 2009, 10:41:13 pm**

Glad to see you're having fun with Stug. I'm half-tempted to attempt a journal for him, but I think it would be difficult to do, given his limited linguistic capabilities. Then again, I suppose I could make the journal in goblin-text..

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **May 23, 2009, 11:16:34 pm**

Write in the manner of Stug's thoughts. Bonus if you write it with phrase like "hot-liquid-flame" (meaning magma).

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **May 24, 2009, 01:12:47 am**

Quote from: Eagle on May 23, 2009, 11:16:34 pm  
Write in the manner of Stug's thoughts. Bonus if you write it with phrase like "hot-liquid-flame" (meaning magma).

'stug want water-flame. stug want burn world.'

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Lord Dullard** on **May 24, 2009, 01:29:43 am**

stug jurnal, munth of rat, 353  
-----  
  
urn-dwarf teeche stug rite little bit. dwarf words vary hard. all sound like ~~teæ~~ **child** talk mouth full beekdog meat to stug.  
  
stug follo Ragna-dwarf, Ragna-dwarf strong. Ragna-dwarf dumb to way-of-strongist, but says have uther way. stug want know uther-way, call '*law*'. stug no undurstand *law*. must lurn if law-way betur than strongist-way, or if is ~~smunastu~~ **lie**.  
  
stug rite mor latur. dwarf-rite make stug hed hurt.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Kanute** on **May 24, 2009, 03:42:45 am**

I was under the impression that Stug was not so much stupid as brought up in a completely different culture. Lord Dullard, are you implying that he is daft in that last sentence of the journal entry, or that wrapping his head around the writing is making him concentrate too much leading to his head hurting?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Broose** on **May 24, 2009, 03:54:14 am**

Quote from: Lord Dullard on May 24, 2009, 01:29:43 am  
stug jurnal, munth of rat, 353  
-----  
  
urn-dwarf teeche stug rite little bit. dwarf words vary hard. all sound like ~~teæ~~ **child** talk mouth full beekdog meat to stug.  
  
stug follo Ragna-dwarf, Ragna-dwarf strong. Ragna-dwarf dumb to way-of-strongist, but says have uther way. stug want know uther-way, call '*law*'. stug no undurstand *law*. must lurn if law-way betur than strongist-way, or if is ~~smunastu~~ **lie**.  
  
stug rite mor latur. dwarf-rite make stug hed hurt.

I liked that. It was cool how you made him accidentally use the goblin language a few times.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 24, 2009, 08:28:00 am**

*Ragna's Log*  
6th Limestone, 353  
  
Aware of the risks, I have taken on Stug as a lance-constable to keep a close eye on him. Having done this, I also brought Ascubis in because he just doesn't shut up about wanting training and we can't put a good miner into full time military service. I need more hands anyway, just to deal with all the little disturbances that pop up in the village all the time. Speaking of which, before he was pulled off into

the constabulary Ascubis dug up another of those bauxite rods. Again, got a rubbing and the main is on display in the Mayor's office.

Code: [\[Select\]](#)

nsliiTSolortkoErHtsDdsaeatrdsIRAapDrTjLcldiaiaEhTheEheASexngheTNcdaotntEHpbTaetaiOSEFM

Some complaints from the citizenry about the request I put in for a gaol block. Tough, frankly. I can't just keep administering beatings for every single infraction or I just look like a thug. A gaol gets the law inside dwarven heads, which is the only way to keep it.

7th Limestone, 353

Fath salt bolt upright in his bed. The dream had been so vivid. He clamped his eyes shut again and whooped with joy; he could still see it! It was fading fast but the lines were still there, the detail and the finesse. He opened his eyes again and grabbed an iron stylus from his bedside table, searching the room frantically for something to write on. His hand fell first upon a small toy boat Yngwie had made for him; a little chalk carving with two narrow crescents of agave cloth for sails. He regarded it fondly for a moment before remorselessly carving into it with the stylus.

11th Limestone, 353

Fath glanced backward furtively, scratching away at the fine chalk tablet with the stylus, scoring the final designs in minute detail. The banging on the door had ceased, replaced by a steady thumping of increasing loudness. The hinges on the stone door screeched in complaint until at last it burst inward, shattering the chalk lock and letting in the fresh air of day.

"Fath!" came the call through the billowing dust. "Are you okay?"

Fath ignored the call, etching the last few circles and placing the tablet in the hollowed out shell of the miniature boat, its surface covered with eldritch designs. He turned to face the ensemble of dwarves that had invaded his room and grinned through a dust-covered beard and bleary red eyes.

"It's done," he croaked, then collapsed onto the bed.

*Emerin's Log*  
12th Limestone, 353

Fath is blessedly alive, though he slept for a solid day when we finally broke through the locks he had installed on the door. He has covered this chalk toy with designs and engravings, all of them as puzzling as they are beautiful. He calls the finished design 'Fencedhearts', claiming it to be the blueprints for the 'thinking machine' he has been raving about these last few years. Loksvig looked them over and says he can barely understand them, but they seem to be based in the numerical engine design he made for Danielle, but taken to an absurd level. Half of the designs are encoded into the artwork and the other half into the designs themselves, as if when discovering his space to draw designs was limited he opted to triple-encrypt everything to compress the information into as small a space as he could. This could take years to decode, even for him.

We've finished the excavation of the burial chambers, including one last bauxite rod in an iron chest, same as the others we found. Copied out the inscription on it, but like the others I've left it on display in my office.

Code: [\[Select\]](#)

FalwhifGuAlisEutHeIEiHNTNdIntnnfvetHheeDAnLLRenhtsBThndsieDeRhiAnVeyiimisUtYboSfyAVRO

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Writer's block is a pain. Fortunately, we're getting to the point where I can actually start playing the game for cues again, because we're almost up to date with the actual events ingame. Blargh.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**

Post by: **Boksi** on **May 24, 2009, 08:49:52 am**

Those bauxite rods are puzzling. Seriously, the only possible link to it is to Kel's little cult thingy, and that's a very tenuous connection relying on some sort of magic to make it work.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**

Post by: **Lord Dullard** on **May 24, 2009, 11:41:55 am**

Quote from: Kanute on May 24, 2009, 03:42:45 am

I was under the impression that Stug was not so much stupid as brought up in a completely different culture. Lord Dullard, are you implying that he is daft in that last sentence of the journal entry, or that wrapping his head around the writing is making him concentrate too much leading to his head hurting?

No - the latter. Consider that he is being taught to write part-time in a second language by someone who has better things to do, probably only knows how to write semi-legibly in his *mother* tongue, since I doubt most goblins are literate - and you would sympathize with why he says it makes his head hurt. It's more of an expression of frustration than of stupidity. ;)

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**

Post by: **Kanute** on **May 24, 2009, 02:03:23 pm**

@ **Lord Dullard**  
OK gotcha! Also, I liked the "munth of rat."

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**

Post by: **Kel the Oblivious** on **May 24, 2009, 03:33:34 pm**

I doubt my little group of addicts has anything to do with these rods. All my evil is stuff really far, far away. Did it carry into this land, or was this land already corrupt and my brew only lets it seep into the mind? I dun know.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**

Post by: **Sphalerite** on **May 24, 2009, 04:55:32 pm**

From the letter frequency and fixed length I'm pretty sure this is some kind of transposition cipher, possibly some form of route cipher, but I haven't been able to work out the mapping yet.

16th Limestone, 353

"It seems there are more and more of you every time I visit, Urist," mused Datan as he stepped off the lip of the wagon, glancing up and around at the bright Nishan chapel. "Enough, it seems, to prompt real architecture. I am almost impressed." Emerin noticed that he had brought a full three wagons and four additional packbeasts this time. She commented as such.

"What can I say?" he shrugged. "In the wake of the war the country is rebuilding, and the goblins have started taking advantage of the destruction. Throws the old trade routes into chaos. As expensive as it is keeping this little town of yours secret, it is also my most profitable venture."

"Expensive?" asked Emerin, surprised.

"Oh, yes. Much of the proceeds from that little bribe of yours last year went into a lot of other pockets, I'm afraid. Sorry, did you think it would be easy to hide a village of nearly fifty dwarves? Especially one that builds upward and makes its presence so obvious? Fortunately, we are plenty enough willing to overlook this for the suitable fee." Datan held out a hand.

Emerin presented him with a box containing a wrought iron flute, encrusted with rubicelles and amethysts, bringing a smile to the elf's features. He snapped the box shut and slid it into his coat.

"Since you seem to have such skill here working gems," he explained, leading Emerin to one of the pack beasts, "we brought you some materials to work with." Datan removed a small iron box from the beast, unlocking it and showing it to Emerin. The old gem thief felt her heart melt.

"Are those yellow diamonds?" she almost mouthed in awe.

"Indeed," grinned the elf. "I see you've picked out the star rubies as well, not to mention the emerald. There is a very wide selection of gemstones here, more than suitable for your needs I hope. You will of course give us a very generous price, I am sure."

"Of course," smiled Emerin broadly. She didn't even need Danielle to calculate how many firecaps this little treasure trove would bring.

"We also have plenty of alcohol, including a few barrels of local desert brew for sale if you wish."

"Local brew?" asked Emerin. "There are people living in the desert?"

"You did not know? Dwarves, my dear Urist. It seems there are others who have heard about your little settlement and more importantly about the trade route developing along it. We passed two desert grottos on the way here, burrowed into the sand. Perhaps you would care for us to pass on a message to any more we might find, on our way to Abbeyverse?"

"You think there will be more?" Emerin looked horrified.

"If not now, soon," chuckled Datan. "Perhaps, dear Urist, you should begin planning to cater for more than just your immediate town."

18th Limestone, 353

"Psst," hissed a voice from behind the chapel entrance. The dwarven guard, Likot, paid it no need.

"Psst!" came the voice again. Likot scratched her beard boredly.

"Oi! You!" muttered the voice. Likot raised a bushy brow and turned to the source of the noise. A rather grimy dwarf with a little copper barrel strapped to his back was loitering around the archway.

"What's the matter?" enquired the guard, raising her crossbow casually.

"How much is that barrel of snakeman venom?" whispered the furtive dwarf.

"About seventy gold coins," said the guard, "but I'll need a signed chitty from your guardsmen, since it's dangerous."

"How much without the chitty?"

"How much do you have?"

The dwarf glanced around nervously, then opened up a little bag. Faceted gems gleamed within. Likot opened up the bag and studied it for a moment, then nodded and waved one of the other guards to pass a small wooden keg to him. The dwarf took it gratefully and hobbled off, muttering something about ingredients. Likot quickly pocketed the gems. There would be time enough in Abbeyverse to spend it all on ale and whores.

journal:  
YES my constant asking to join the military haw worked!!!!... well to some degree. though i am just a guard. i will be able to train somewhat and help protect the fortress. all the mining i have done has strengthened me and i will become stronger. i will not let them down.

Absolutely wonderful story.  
Reading it all so far has taken a lot of my time, being a slow reader in English.

Have you got a dungeon master yet? If not, could he be my dwarf at some point?

Name: Gethro (whatever the gender)  
Profession: What usually comes with that type of noble ( Animal trainer/caretaker )  
Description: He was exiled form his former fortress for having been found practicing lewd acts of unnatural affection upon the baron's favourite horses. Gethro had been tasked with the care and training of the baron's pet beasts for many years. He also forged the chains and cages used in the Baron's stables. After admitting (with little shame) that he had been secretly providing the beasts with his "passionate handling" ever since he was assigned to them, he was promptly thrown into one of his own cage and dumped over the nearest waterfalls.  
He miraculously survived the drop, freed himself from the locks (knowing them well since he crafted them) and swam to safety.



Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Kel the Oblivious** on **May 25, 2009, 02:00:47 am**

You have free reign over flashbacks, hallucinations, nightmares, bad acid trips, spirit quests, or other goodness with Kel. His mind is seeped in the stuff everyone is begging to get their hands on. Play around with that. I wanna see how well you can play someone's mind melting ;D

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 25, 2009, 04:24:18 pm**

**Vignette: Peasant Dishes**  
*15th Sandstone, 353*

The soft chime of the bell signalled lunch break, and so Kel, Mincewind and Fora gathered by the pool in the spawn cavern to eat. The glowcaps were not yet ready for harvesting, so small luminescent bowls were hung from the ceiling by chains, hammered into the solid rock. Fora picked a spot relatively thin in the grime and muck that characterised the seeding grounds, kept fresh by composted weeds from the desert above, settled into a comfortable position and unrolling the threadmoss cloth containing their victuals.

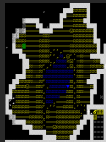
"We used to eat these back in the fortress farms," she commented, taking out the small wraps and passing them between the others. Rough redbulb pastry concealed a firecap paste and a little pickled lorta leaf, a rare shade of green in the dwarven diet. Hidden in the pastries was a special treat; very fine shreds of smoked dogmeat. It had been payday not long before, so Fora had saved for a bit of flesh from the slaughterhouse.

"I brought some treats too," chirped Mincewind cheerfully. Kel eyed Fora cautiously as the self-proclaimed 'kook' produced a handful of apparently ordinary firecaps. It would have taken a sharp eye to discern the small cuts made in the mushrooms, and Kel had such an eye.

"Lovely, Mince," he murmured, sniffing one. "They're stuffed with... eggs? No, wait. The miners hit a brimstone deposit excavating out the gypsum, didn't they?"

"For a really fiery taste!" encouraged Mincewind. Kel slipped the firecaps into his pocket with extreme care, promising to save them for later. He picked up one of the little pastries and nibbled on it.

"What do you call these?" he asked.



"*Shigo*," said Fora. "When I was a kid we used to save up for them, the scant coppers we'd sometimes get from helping out with deconstruction work or the like. You'd finally get one and eat it a tiny piece at a time, until one of your friends asked for a bite. So you let them have one and you always regretted it because they'd chomp off a massive block and wolf it down and that'd be half a week's pocket money down someone else's throat. When I got older I used to get a platter of them made on holidays and eat them all a bite at a time. They probably still eat those there now."

"Why didn't you stay?" asked Mincewind, picking up one of the *shigo* and nibbling the end cautiously.

"Stuck with the Duke when the challenge came. Couldn't stomach the idea of elves telling me what to do. When the Duke went down at the battle for Lanternwebs I fled back home, but the Queen's troops had already taken the fortress. Maybe they wouldn't have even noticed me, but I couldn't risk it. Zas, I miss that place." The three sat in silence for a moment.

"So how's our friend who got laid up doing?" asked Kel.

"Not good," muttered Fora, looking down to avoid his eyes. "She refuses to rest, she won't take the draught any more but she's still getting the nightmares, even after you managed to sort out the dosage so we awake before that."

"Nightmares?" asked Mincewind.

"Nothing to worry about," dismissed Kel glibly. "Just troubled sleep. Why don't you think about that marble cake recipe you were working on?"

"She wants to talk," said Fora urgently. "I've tried to convince her not to, but she wants to talk to the Captain. I don't know what to do."

"I'll talk to her," reassured Kel. "I'm certain I can convince her to keep her silence until her injuries no longer trouble her."

"Are you sure?" Fora frowned and bit her lip.

"Trust me."

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 25, 2009, 04:44:12 pm**

*Sgt Broose's Diary*  
22nd Sandstone, 353

Just got back. Goden's dunking his head into a barrel of slatterjack and I don't blame him, we've been rationing water and glow wine for the last two weeks. Seems I arrived just in time for the upper apartments to be finished and outfitted, including the captain's, and Fath is pretty much done copying out all the bloody nonsense he scribbled on that boat. I hope to Gigin he lives, because nobody else is going to figure out that rubbish. It all looks like lines and jommetry to me. Also, the creepy goblin kid is apparently a guard now? Weird.

There are six of these 'sietches' (desert grottos, basically) along the trade routes right now. Four on the route from the inner country to Abbeyverse, two along the Gibdan sand routes. Between four to twelve dwarves in each, took a census for Dani because Goden can't do sums so well. Couple of them (the ones on the Gibdan route) were already there, including a couple of glaziers and their apprentices. Go figure. Rest popped up over the last couple of years, mostly relatives of the existing sand-dwellers who wanted to get out of the country. Desert's not subject to the Queen, not worth the expenditure to control it.

Menu in the sietches not much to write home about. Glow wine and this rather weak drink made from spiky desert pears, then peppers, agave and firecaps baked in desert maize wraps. Spicy both in and out, I can tell you. They do have these giant worms in the desert. Thick as my thumb, they are! Taste great with a bit of punch treacle.

They did mention seeing goblins scouting the region from time to time. Looks like their own war with the Queen isn't going so well, heh heh heh.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 25, 2009, 06:24:33 pm**

The river has frozen over again, putting a crimp in Fath's water power designs. Apparently he just can't get enough volume to push the mills. In other news, the Nishan chapel is now fully complete and awaiting installation of their 'sacred cabinet'. Danielle has started the clock on their debt. An additional little amusement has presented itself as well; the Nishans do not actually own their own chapel. Currently the only private property belongs to the Nakashian shrine. I don't doubt this will change in time but the idea amuses me greatly for now.

14th Timber, 353

I will give Kulet this much; he has style. Carved out a block of solid native platinum into a statue of Nish, cowed in the robe of the Dark Wanderer, stretching one hand out to point and holding small wheel in the other. I can only assume the statue will be oriented eastward (big surprise), but the craftsmanship is absolutely masterful. Danielle put a price tag of six thousand firecaps on the unadorned sculpture, but I understand Kulet is paying Karana to adorn it with imported gemstones.

Given the Nakasians essentially have a monopoly on the most gifted jeweller in town, I am beginning to realise how it is they can possess enough wealth to buy out the land around their shrine. For all their apparent humility, perhaps it would pay to keep a closer eye on them. When I raised the issue with Frey, he suggested a contact in their ranks. Not sure how comfortable I am with that, but can it hurt to be cautious?

18th Timber, 353

Kadol, one of the planters, has gone completely insane. Already committed to extended bedrest after an accident months ago, she suffered from nightmares and delusions at length and finally broke down completely last night. She has been reduced to a state of gibbering and crying and refuses to recognise the world around her. Out of the incoherent babbling only one word keeps resurfacing; *nazush*, an archaic term for blood. The captain initially suspected the influence of the unknown substance she banned earlier in the year, but no trace was found in any of Kadol's food and drink or in her room.

As Kadol is now barely eating and drinking and her mind has completely gone from the delusions, it is only a matter of time. Her tomb has been prepared and her friends have said their goodbyes. The captain has received no further reports about nightmares or accidents since the drink was banned, so hopefully this will put an end to such misfortune.

16th Moonstone, 353

For a joke, I banned the export of adamantine items today.

It could happen.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **May 25, 2009, 08:54:41 pm**

ok, these books and rods must somehow revolve around armok. considering that we have a dwarf speaking in ancient tounge about blood constantly now

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Kel the Oblivious** on **May 25, 2009, 09:39:11 pm**

A neatly squared and smoothed chalk slab. Blue ink covers a great deal of it, sketching and etchings of plants, geometric shapes, odd shadowed figures and one small picture of a small squat stone building, several large copper stills sticking out of it..

*Journal of Kel Ragebrew*

*I have been tasked with clearing out some of the stone from Kadol's tomb. Ironic... I will be the one hauling in the coffin she will dream eternally in. I had little chose in the matter. I will not let some fearful dirt churner ruin my efforts. Not now, after I have removed the worst of the effects to those less ~~erazed~~ ~~demented~~ mentally unsound than myself. They dream, they do not awake screaming. I still have yet to remedy that for myself, but it must be the horrors I witnessed first hand that have scarred my mind as such, not just the essence of the plants I brew.*

*I pity I had to waste so much of my Blood Ink on her, but it was safer then, say, cleaving her skull asunder. And my mind rests easily knowing her death is not at my hands. Yes, I may have broken her mind, but it was her own weakness that let cracks grow in the first place. Still, her journey to the here after, if such a place even exists, will not be done sober. I have requested one of the smiths to make me a simple flask. I told him, while I didn't know Kadol all that well, old family tradition says someone needs to leave her with a flask and a drink, so she can bribe the guard to the afterlife or at least share so he's a bit friendlier.*

*I have still not decided what to do with the snake man venom. Hiding the barrel was simple enough, a few hours at night digging another hole outside the eastern wall, before going berry picking. The plants here are fairly mundane, but they to brew up well enough. I think I am going to request a full time still being made, so I can create less baleful brews to line my pockets legitimately. I have not accepted a single firecap for my brews. I just take food, and the occasional trinket. Even if I sold my concotions for the price of a normal cup of ale, people would notice every payday I would suddenly have a lot more caps floating around, even though I am just a hauler who knows how to pick through bushes and get some berrys.*

Throwing the twig and ink bottle back into his small stone coffer, the ragged dwarf lifted himself from the bed and began walking outside, his bare feet light on the floor.

Standing out in the cold night air, he clenched his journal entry close, following the same path he took every night, even if he wrote or not. He dug out the same hole, watching both the fine grains of sand fly away in the night breeze and anyone who wandered around at this hour. His ritual was common enough, and no one bothered the mad dwarf. Easing the tablet into the hole, he neatly filled it back in, drawing a picture of a cow in the sand before getting up and wandering back to his room. He wasn't in the mood to get sand in everything tonight, he would use his actual bed.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Aldaris** on **May 26, 2009, 05:30:48 am**

Beautifull, you portrayed Mincewind perfectly, and all the entries including those of other people, fit together nicely.

And of course, it's a great read.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 26, 2009, 10:39:10 am**

18th Moonstone, 353

Yngwie finished turning the coiled iron, dipping it into the bucket of thick lintseed oil to cool. That was the last of the giant corkscrew

orders, so Yngwie rested her tongs over the raging vent and drew her sleeve across her brow, glancing over to Ousire busily skimming slag from the furnace. She frowned at the sound of one of Ousire's donkeys braying, waving to the smelter to get her attention. Ousire lifted her work mask and turned around to check on the donkey.

"Vabok," she called to the fretting beast. "What's the matter, you silly ass? What's-

Ousire froze solid when she saw the dwarf standing in the passageway. Dressed in a mud-stained green uniform, her mind flashed back to the colours worn by the dwarves who had broken her family. The face of the dwarf before her was amongst them. When she saw the three pike-wielding goblins sneaking up behind, she screamed.

On cue Vabok kicked the foreign dwarf sharply in the chest and bolted for the entrance whilst the other donkey, Solon, reared at the three pikegoblins. Yngwie grabbed hold of the alarm cord on the wall and yanked, compressed air escaping through the fluted end and sending a resounding cry throughout the region. Ousire remained rooted to the spot, petrified as the dwarf grabbed her by the arm and the goblins drove a spear through Solon's leg, then his skull.

*No time for the militia to arrive*, raced Yngwie's thoughts. *Only time for one of us to get out*. She grabbed the white-hot tongs from the forge.

"Run, Ousie!" she yelled, turning to face the dwarf as Ousire broke his hold and ran for her life. She pointed at his face with the tongs. "You know, your chin's a little off," she growled. "Let me fix that for you."

Yngwie swung the tongs into the dwarf's chin with a heavy crack, setting his beard alight. As she pulled the tongs back for another swing, one of the pikegoblins stuck his weapon through her arm. Yngwie cried out in pain, dropping the tongs harmlessly as another spearpoint drove into her thigh. Ousire turned at the entrance in shock and horror and froze again. Yngwie stretched out a hand.

"Run!" she cried again, a spear blade slicing off one of her fingers and mangling the outstretched hand. Ousire broke into a run and Yngwie fell backward as the three goblins stabbed and stabbed until she moved no more.

The donkey Vabok ran in front of her mistress and kicked out at the goblins and the foreign dwarf as they tried to exit the armoury, receiving pikeblades to her flank for her troubles and buying Ousire enough time to reach the safety of the upper slopes. From there she watched events unfold.

The goblin scout leapt up to ambush the approaching militiadwarves, dagger brandished and ready for the kill. A flashing sabre took off her leg and a split second later a bolt whizzed through her chest. She tumbled harmlessly down the rock face as the militia ran for the armoury.

Datan reached the base first, bringing his axe through the guts of one of the three pikegoblins as they rushed across the open sands in pursuit of the fleeing smelter. One of Broose's bolts arched down from the hillside, throwing the goblin to the ground and snapping his neck with the impact. Jora broke into a dance as she reached the remaining goblins, spinning in an arc and gracefully decapitating the first speargoblin. She turned and cleanly sliced off the left arm of the second goblin at the shoulder, prompting a cry of pain. A second stroke took off the right arm. A third and fourth robbed the goblin of his limbs. Jora grinned at the soldier through her bloodied beard.

"Don't worry," she crooned. "It's only a flesh wound." A final stroke removed the goblin's eye, ear and throat, and she left him to suffer his final moments in the sand.

The dwarf ran for safety, another of Broose's bolts spearing through his hand as he raised it against the shadow blotting out the sun. Khain descended from the sky, double-ended spear driving through the dwarf's gut. Another of Broose's bolts ripped through the dwarf's already cracked face, shattering it. Khain tore the blade out of the dwarf's gut and he slumped to the ground in unconsciousness. Jora approached the prone figure.

"Want we should capture him?" she asked. Broose shook his head.

"Deserter, from the uniform. Don't recognise the unit. Not gonna live long anyway. Finish him, even a traitor deserves a clean death."

"Right you are, sarge." Jora thrust her sabre through the dwarf's chest, then turned to the smithy. Her face fell when she saw what lay inside.

"Sarge," she murmured. "You're gonna want to see this, but you're not gonna like it."

19th Moonstone, 353

"You sure?" asked Ragna, looking to the two dwarves stood over the body. Broose took a swig from a hip flask nearby.

"Hard to tell with the damage to the face," said Loksvig, "but I recognise the insignia. He's from our unit alright. Corporal, probably fought with him."

"I think that's probably Sigun," added Frey, studying the corpse. "Sigun Creaturerelic, aye. Not one of the best examples of a soldier I ever saw, not a big surprise if he defected."

"How'd he come to be leading goblins, then?" asked Ragna.

"Prob'ly just fell into it," grunted Broose. "War ends, guy has no other skills. What's a soldier got left? He can take up as a bandit and good luck with that, or he can find some other army as needs him."

"What are we going to do with the body?" asked Loksvig.

"Burn it," said Broose. "Deserters don't get burials, they don't get honour, and the filth joined a goblin army at that. We can't leave him to rot, but we're not soiling the rock here with him either, so set a pyre with some weeds and oil and let that be an end to him. Gigin can take him for all I care."

20th Moonstone, 353

The service over, the Nishans departed, Fath sat alone by the casket in the silent tomb. He ran his hand across the stone that a month before it had smoothed. He had added a few engravings over the previous day, trying to add a little decoration to the otherwise spartan chamber. It had seemed wrong somehow to consign the girl to a mere servant's chamber.

He traced his fingers over the inscription on the microcline;  
Code: [\[Select\]](#)

Yngwie Mirrorcastles 288 - 353
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and glanced to the two coffers containing the remains of Ousire's treasured donkeys. The smelter had stood through the service, fighting throughout to hold back her tears. She looked as if Gigin's own wrath burned like magma in her heart.

Fath sighed softly and stood, placing the tiny chalk boat upon the coffin. He kissed his fingers softly and pressed them to the cold stone, wiping his eyes. The mechanic did his best to smile and whispered to the coffin not to fear, that everything would turn out alright.

"We'll show them," he promised softly.

"We'll show them all."

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 26, 2009, 10:42:48 am**

An interesting little tidbit about the dwarf leading the ambush there; apparently he was extremely ambivalent on matters of faith.

In the early winter of 353, Sigun was struck down by ‘Jora’ Swamwhipped the Orbs–Clod of Fame in Gearabbey’s.

**Related Historical Figures**

Iden Slingoars, mother, b. 295  
Múthkat Pickclub, father, b. 289  
Cobim Ivoryswelters the Branded Diamond the dragon, object of casual worship  
Thatthil Insighttaught the Scholarly Relic of Permanencies the titan, object of dubious worship  
Lisig, object of worship  
Zedan Diamondsparks the Branded Fortunes the dragon, object of dubious worship  
Rimad Torchamused, object of ardent worship  
Ral, object of worship  
Ifin Renowncontrolled, object of worship  
Anan Spidermenace the Rumor of Secreting, object of worship  
Zon the Disemboweled Fences, object of dubious worship  
Akam Chancedlucky, object of worship  
Amare Certaincontrol the Swift Jewels the hydra, object of casual worship, d. 336  
Lolum, object of worship  
Ebbak Parchwealths the Flickering Fire the dragon, object of worship  
Kovest Fireparched the Silvers of Heating the dragon, object of casual worship  
Uslot Glowtaxes the Spark of Furnaces the dragon, object of casual worship  
Solon Colorlantern, wife, b. 333 d. 349  
Aspuz Wereglares, only son, b. 349

Another impressive statistic comes from one of the (defeated) demon leaders, Ngoso Sizzleflickered the Sweltering Skull... who had *five hundred and forty-one kills* to his name before finally being killed and eaten by an elf. Ngoso personally led a *hell* of a lot of attacks on other settlements and liked to get stuck in on the action. Pretty terrifying guy.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Kanute** on **May 26, 2009, 11:12:05 am**

No, not Yngwie!

I'll take comfort in that there was fire and revenge (?) swearing involved, at least.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **May 26, 2009, 11:20:27 am**

wait....my super awesome insane best-friend-for-ever is dead? O\_O and so are my donkeys? **carp!**

maybe now my character becomes the mechanic?.....or now we start construction on the walls of brass/insane traps that make olonkulet what it is?....

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Rysith** on **May 26, 2009, 01:24:03 pm**

I'm almost tempted to go try to decrypt the messages, but it would be out of character for Jora. Ah well.

Also, hooray for Lanternwebs being in the story!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Keita** on **May 26, 2009, 02:04:20 pm**

wow dwarfs leading goblins

from the jurnle of Khain:  
Damn it! again I'm the last into battle and yet again I'm left to mop up what evers left. this hasn't help with the other dwarfs commenting on my undwarfish weapon, some even called it *Elvish* I gave em a good smack around the chops for there trouble.

I must continue to train using my new weapon and somehow find time to train my agility, I might have to use my remaning free time for train...

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Kanute** on **May 26, 2009, 04:01:36 pm**

Can I request a second dwarf? My first one got speared to death :(

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 26, 2009, 06:09:01 pm**

*Sgt Broose's Diary*  
23rd Moonstone, 353

Got to talking with that smelter girl, Ousire. Lot of anger in her, lot of fear. Seen it before. Wanted to join the militia, or work on trapbuilding. Told her that she'll do more good smelting weaponry right now, on account of she's the best we have at it, but she didn't take it well. Got me to thinking about the attack, though, how we could use all the help we can really get.

Started piling up the skulls littered around the village; goblin, kobold, even the old dog skulls. Figure it's a start.

24th Moonstone, 353

Put in a chit with Dani for a bit of a wall extension, paid up for a platinum statue too. Karana let me go into a bit of debt to manage it, but I guess someone has to do all this or it just won't get done. Gigin's teeth, not as if I was using my pay for anything constructive anyway, pissed most of it up against a wall.



Looks like that dwarf deserter wasn't alone. His commander came after him, steel chainmail and a bloody scourge, towing four goblin slaves and one of the greenskins with a flail at that. First gobber skids straight into the pit traps (more useful than they look, those) and as usual, bloody pirate lass gets in first. Takes out the flail swinger with one stroke, bisects another and then does the whole bloody limb amputation thing she does on the dwarf, rendering him completely useless for any sort of questioning. Shot out a couple of the slaves myself, but all we've got for a prisoner is one of the bloody slaves and he doesn't even speak the damn language.

Got in a spot of good old fashioned looting at the end, nabbed his shirt for myself. No use wasting a decent bit of steel chain. Found some identification; Captain Kosoth Webpages, 13th Axe division. Bastard could've served alongside me at some point. Decorated and everything, a bloody war hero. Even had a macaque bone locket with a double engraving of him and some sweetheart he probably left in the Mountainhomes years ago, poor bastard. What in Gigin's tight leather pants was he doing fighting on the side of bloody goblins?

3rd Opal, 353

Creepy goblin kid (his dwarven's still crap, but I'm starting to understand what he says almost half the time now) has been 'interrogating' the prisoners for a week now. Pretty rough with them, too, didn't think he'd be so keen on beating up his own kith like that. Guess goblins are a pretty backstabbing bunch after all. Didn't do much good, goblins don't say much besides their names and who cares about those? One of them was from this bunch of travelling raiders, tried to sneak in to kidnap kids, it seems. The kid went peelifruit on him at that point, Ragna had to pry the iron bar out of his hand. Imagine that was a bit of a sore spot. Injuries'll heal, so no permanent damage to the prisoner there. Other gobber was from raiders too, got captured and enslaved by the mailed dwarf and his henchies. Didn't know anything about where the rest of them were from.

15th Opal, 353

Took me half a month, but got this little shrine in place. Kulet carved me up a statue of Gigin from platinum, exceptional piece at that (and he didn't bloody half charge for it, it'll take me six months to work off the debt to Karana on this). Not a bad sculpture; kitted out in chain and mail, chainmail veil over her face and beard, axe in one hand, set-square and compasses in the other, standing on a mound of skulls. Got the skulls around the statue to rest up against the base just tight enough you can't see the join, so it looks good.

Creepy goblin kid asked what I was up to. Sat down and tried to explain the idea behind Gigin to him. Seemed interested, wanted me to fill him in sometime. What harm can it do, I guess?

1st Obsidian, 353  
*(The writing in this entry is especially skewed and illegible.)*

Everyone got drunk today! I got especially drunk and made it all the way to Borax. Two births on the same day. Two farmers' wives, Iteb and Stukos, gave birth to a girl and boy, Urist and Sodel. It's great. Bloody minstrel came and sang songs at me until I threw enough firecaps at her for her to go away. Now I'm going to fall up and throw asleep.

-----

Request away, Kanute! One of the dangers of using fortresses as a story engine is that sometimes things do just cock up and characters die before their story arcs can even be pursued. Alas.

Redhades: Gethro will arrive whenever the DM does. No fear, he/she's reserved now!

---

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Boksi** on **May 26, 2009, 06:15:11 pm**

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\*Snerk\*

I don't know why I found the last entry so humorous. Maybe it's because Vigdis is in it. Or maybe not. I don't know.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **May 26, 2009, 06:26:51 pm**

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i dont know why but ur post mad me laugh boksi

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Redhades** on **May 26, 2009, 06:56:36 pm**

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Quote from: Iituem on May 26, 2009, 06:09:01 pm

Redhades: Gethro will arrive whenever the DM does. No fear, he/she's reserved now!

Cheers!

I do miss those little series of ascii scenes you where making in the beginning. Those were very nice. Especially the blue night scenes. They made me wish that DF had a day-night cycle.

But I understand if you find them a hassle to make, or not as rewarding as actual writing.

I'd offer myself to do them for you, but I've been playing graphic mode all along and have a very poor idea of what things in the game look in ascii.

Edit: Oh, I forgot you made on on the previous page. :-X

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 26, 2009, 07:31:40 pm**

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It has more to do with them being appropriate for the scene. I happily do ASCII for the Vignettes because they don't happen strictly within the gameworld, but for events that did happen within the gameworld I'd have to take screenshots, which end up being rather messy and don't look that good. Some Vignettes are also pretty stationary (lots of talking, character development, not that much action or scene changes) and so only a single pic ends up getting made, if at all. This is why I love Ragna's backstory so much; plenty of scene changes and action.

The exception here is the nightmare sequences. I am deliberately not drawing those because horror works better the more is left to the imagination.

Not to mention the ASCII in AsciiDraw and in DF don't quite match up, so certain things (like boulders and statues, which Olonkulet is full of) can't be displayed if I try and mock up a scene from ingame.

DF does have a day-night cycle, in Adventure Mode. That's the colour scheme I use for the night/dark scenes in the ASCII pics.

What I could do is physically draw scenes, but I have neither scanner nor tablet on this computer, not to mention it being ages since I figure sketched enough to get the proportions right. Perhaps later.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Kanute** on **May 26, 2009, 07:33:15 pm**

**Name** Ulvruffeldolf  
**gender** male  
**proffesion** Tradesdwarf  
**background**

Dolf comes from a human city with a large dwarven population. Like many of the inhabitants, his dwarvish is fairly stilted and has adopted the humans' ways. He became a trader and enjoyed midling success in selling large corkscrews. After amassing a sizable sum of coins, Dolf organized a traditional dwarven settling party in order to search for wealth, power, and an insight into his dwarven heritage. His expedition was successful, but after striking gold it broke up due to greed. He left with only his gold-lined clothes to his name

EDIT: Made him a tradesdwarf. It makes more sense, I think, with his entrepreneurial outlook.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **May 27, 2009, 12:34:54 am**

oh dont worry man, its totaly cool to just **totally ignore** my requests about my dwarf's job. >\_> and not even give me the requested one as a side task or whatever. i want to be the one who starts olonkulet on its path to batshit engineering! probably would work together with the dude thats making caculators and stuff

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **May 27, 2009, 12:52:48 am**

Quote from: ousire on May 27, 2009, 12:34:54 am  
oh dont worry man, its totaly cool to just **totally ignore** my requests about my dwarf's job. >\_> and not even give me the requested one as a side task or whatever. i want to be the one who starts olonkulet on its path to batshit engineering! probably would work together with the dude thats making caculators and stuff

I think Loksvig should have a big part in turning Olonkulet into a technological terror, since Maggarg is the one who came up with the idea of Olonkulet in the first place. And Fath. You know, the two dwarves already doing mechanical machinations.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Kanute** on **May 27, 2009, 12:55:13 am**

Ousire, there doesn't really seem like the fortress has a need for mechanisms, and by association mechanics, at the moment. With the massive influx of migrants and lack of desire to despoil the depths of the earth, seems like massive aboveground construction of housing complexes will be preferentially made. There really doesn't seem to be much dwarfpower to derail from the essentials of the fortress, from what I've gathered.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **May 27, 2009, 01:32:18 am**

speaking of which, why exactly are we building **up** again?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **May 27, 2009, 02:20:37 am**

To conserve the mountain and its resources.

Quote from: Page 3  
"No, not dig in," murmured Danielle. "Build up." If the dwarves had been stunned at Frey's suggestion, they were outright shocked at Danielle's.  
"Look at the Mountainhomes," she insisted. "The old town we went through, the way it was abandoned like that when the veins dried up. The heavy swathes cut through the mountains with no regard for either aesthetic or nature. Don't look at me like that!" she snapped at Broose. "I know what you're thinking. This all sounds Elvish. Well, the Elves are nutters and we all know it, especially over things that grow back with time. Mountains don't grow back. What sort of future are we going to leave for our children?"

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 27, 2009, 07:06:07 am**

Kanute pretty much has it on the nose here. There is no mechanical work going on at the moment that would call for Ousire (I've got her slated for the labour when it comes up), but there is plenty of smelting. Since she started with furnace operation as her immigrant skill, it's a better use than leaving her to do nothing but haul while we wait for the mechanical side of things to really kick in.

Right now the mechanics team consists of Fath, Loksvig and optionally Karana and Ousire, since those were all the requested mechanics. The problem is that Karana got a gemcutter artefact and ended up becoming a holy dwarf, and Ousire is the most capable smelter in town. They do still work mechanics when it comes up and I'll try and write that in as it happens.

I don't ignore requests, but the mechanics of the game can make it difficult to fit them in easily and sometimes take the story in different ways.

Jim has it on the reasoning, plus for the sake of aesthetics and facility. It might not seem like it, but it is a lot easier for me to build a mechanical deathtrap *up* than it is dig one down, especially if I make a mistake. You can deconstruct walls, you can't deconstruct caverns.

To ease your worries though, Chapter 4 is when the mechanical side of things starts kicking in as Olonkulet is forced into it by necessity. I'll make sure requested mechanics get work on that.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 27, 2009, 10:31:06 am**

**Vignette: Waiter in the Dark**  
*8th Obsidian, 353*

The completion of the Deleran shrine was a quiet, unadorned affair, a stark contrast to the fanfare of the Nishan chapel's construction, or the riotous feasts of the Nakasians. Two simple diorite statues adorned the polished stone dome, a pair of male dwarves with bowed heads and hands in prayer. A handful of dwarves stood by as the last statue was shifted into place and had failed to notice the

troubadour in the shadows til she shook alive the thin glass glowbulbs and began to strum a sombre tune upon an obsidian lute, strung with brass wires. After a couple of bars and without any prompting she began to sing.

*In the days before when the world was young,  
When the copper fortress blazed like the sun,  
A rich Dark Wand'rer returned from the East,  
Her sister rejoiced and ordered a Feast.*

*To the fest'val came two brothers of Tin,  
A copper-toned jew'l, the warrior Gigin,  
To celebrate Nish's return with proof  
Of lands to the East and also a Truth:*

*The secret of godhood, the spark divine,  
Baked into Nakasian dishes so fine  
That each one was raised to the heights of grace,  
Reborn and renewed, emboldened by faith.*

*The price of their rising was one quite dark,  
The lands were made barren, the world left stark  
And empty - save those who had risen so,  
Tasked with the fate of renewing the world.*

*"Deler!" cried Onol, "We shall remake dwarves,  
Forge them from ir'n from the mountain's own source!"  
"Nay," said Deler, "Not so soft are our sons,  
Forge them anew from an alloy of bronze!"*

*Deler and Onol, they fought for the right  
To remake the dwarves; it came to a fight!  
Onol dug iron from veins 'neath the earth,  
Breathed it to life and brought about its birth.  
So Deler and Zas together joined will,  
Mixed copper and tin, a cast they did fill.*

*Bronze dwarf and ir'n dwarf together did clash,  
The latter's soft hide was easily smashed  
By the hardness and strength of bronze's might.  
It seemed that the bronze dwarf would win the fight  
When Gigin from Onol received a bribe  
And gave the ir'n dwarf a drink to imbibe:*

*Made from charcoal and flux and molten flame  
And on drinking it the dwarf rose again.  
Strengthened by war-fire, no pain did he feel,  
The dwarf won the battle, forged now from steel.  
Deler cried out - a terrifying sound -  
His tin became oil, he sank to the ground.*

*Zas became wounded and fled to the night,  
A creature of dreams beyond mortal sight.  
Onol's own tin grew brilliant as silver,  
Built Gigin a fortress with his skill for  
The debt he owed; and Nakas a tavern,  
While Deler called from a midnight cavern;*





"Onol, you give the dwarves gifts of life,  
Gigin, you then fill those lives with your strife,  
Nakas, respite will your revelry give,  
Guided by Nish in wealth they will live,  
But sins to jewelled dark dreams they'll confess  
And here in the dark I'll take them at death."

So it was that the pantheon was made  
Here to remain 'til the world at last fades.  
Here in the depths we'll remember truth stark,  
Live life in light!

Deler waits in the dark.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Sphalerite** on **May 27, 2009, 12:08:48 pm**

This is a masterfully crafted story. It menaces with spikes of awesome and is decorated with hanging rings of win.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Boksi** on **May 27, 2009, 01:49:32 pm**

:3

The fifth line of the ninth verse is awkward, but that's maybe 4% of the whole song, so it's nitpicking.

The song is *good*.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 27, 2009, 02:30:14 pm**

Yeah, rhyming someone called 'Onol the Tin Silver' is a pain. I hate iambic pentameter so much, but it's Vigdis' given speech scheme. --.

Thank goodness the civ didn't gen a deity called 'Likot the Brokenness of Orange'.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Boksi** on **May 27, 2009, 04:25:54 pm**

Maybe you might want to try a ferskeytla? It's a dwarven style if I ever saw one.

It's four lines of alternating seven and six syllables. They rhyme, although there is no set pattern for which lines rhyme with which. Two words in the seven-syllable lines alliterate with either the first or sometimes the second syllable of the six-syllable line below it. Here's an example:

Hann er gamall glaður kall,  
gramur er hann sjaldan.  
Kallinn drekkur drillumall,  
drykkinn fær sér kaldan.

It's a style popular with the vikings of yore, so as I said it's very dwarven.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **May 27, 2009, 06:33:39 pm**

awsome song! very dwarfy, *and* it does the job of giving us all details on the gods of this world. (which one do i worship again?)  
oh, and sorry for the crabby post before. it was late at night and i was in a funk at the time. its good to hear i shall be on the deathtrap making crew soon! (maybe we should re-name the jobs? instead of mechanic, trapmaster could be used! ;D)

and as an added bonus, i checked out the details on smelters on the wiki. you use them to make bronze! and if my memory serves, olonkulet was supposed to be surrounded by walls of bronze. i make some of the traps, and i can make the metal that shall surround the city of machines!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Redhades** on **May 28, 2009, 12:30:29 am**

Awesome ascii art as well. I am pleased.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Kel the Oblivious** on **May 28, 2009, 10:43:17 pm**

Well, that bard deserves a warm meal and a strong drink for that one. Anyone got a few caps to pitch in on it?



**Vignette: Moonlit Brass**  
*11th Obsidian, 353*

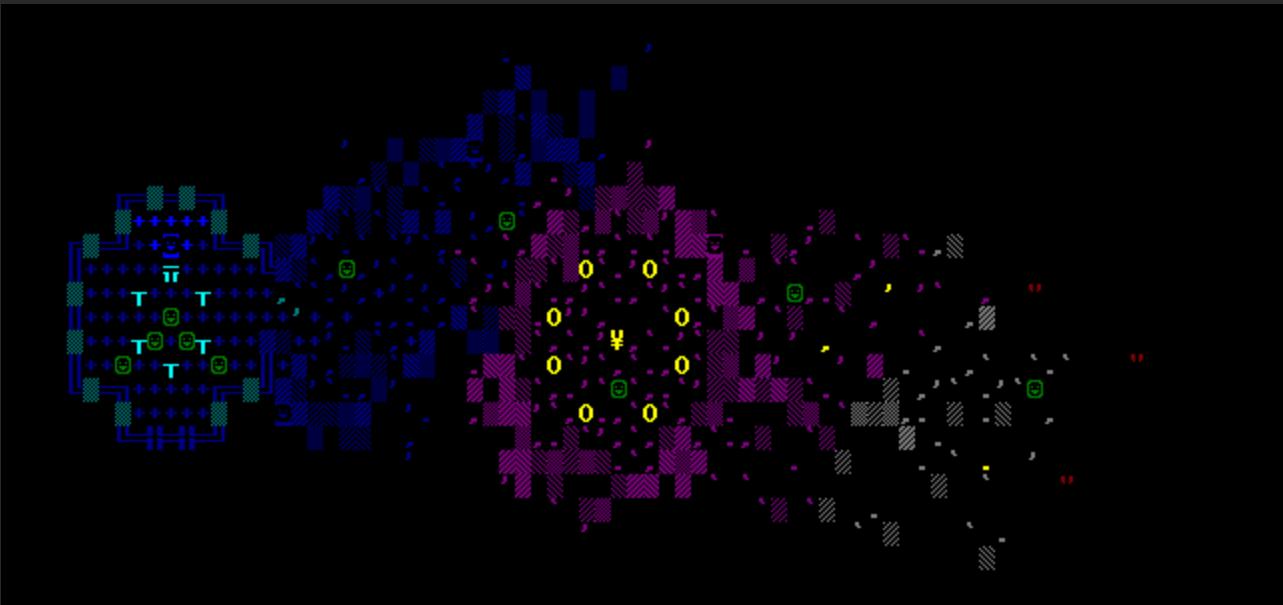
The dreams were changing.

Jora opened her eyes and found herself in the Temple again. Jewelled azure walls rose up around her, moonlight filtering through crystal and emerald glass in pools, highlighting the brilliant altar and chairs. Stood upon a raised platform, the preacher spoke to her, garbed in indigo robes that flashed with hints of deep purple and glimmering violet and colours for which dwarves had no name, existing only within this distant realm. She bathed herself in His words, rich with meaning but meaningless to her ears. Garbled sounds she would later remember, but their intent and purpose were as clear as day. She turned, catching in the corner of her eye mere glimpses of others she had seen in the light of day, their faces obscured by the shadows.

The preacher said something of moment and Jora's attention returned to Him, rapt and watchful, but He spoke no more. Instead He gestured and as Jora turned to look the chamber around them shattered into clouds of billowing, shimmering jewelled dust, leading her on across an aethereal moonlit plain, the ghostly echoes of pebbles crunching beneath her feet. She came upon a plain where seven brass pillars reached up to the sky, surrounding a statue of a dwarf. The statue bore no clear distinctions, no fine detail or features that would distinguish it as any dwarf in particular; rather it embodied the idea or essence of a dwarf in moulded brass. The brass icon and pillars shone brilliantly against the twilight and featureless plain, the pillars carved with runes as meaningful and unintelligible as the preacher's speech. Jora stood and stared at the shrine for a time she could not measure, enraptured by its beauty and unknown significance.

The pillars fractured suddenly, splintering into shards of gleaming brass that flew away on a sudden, bitter wind. The jewelled clouds scattered and the moonlight died, replaced by a cold cavernous roof and darkness. Jora turned to face the darkness, the last splinters of brass flickering away into the abyss, wherein Jora could catch the faintest glimmers of what watched back. She drew in a breath to scream when an indigo-gloved hand grabbed her shoulder.

Jora woke.



wow  
  
just wow  
punctuation cancels functioning interrupted by sheer awesomeness  
  
again wow

*Danielle's Inventory*  
15th Obsidian, 353

For some reason, someone keeps sending me little slates arguing for a glowcap based economy. I've been ignoring them so far (they should really sign their letters) but the pile is getting annoying.

We also have a bit of an absence issue; the mason Zas has disappeared from the blockworks. Nobody knows has seen him since yesterday. The captain has been informed.

20th Obsidian, 353

The Onolite platform over the magma vents has finally been outfitted with a pair of iron statues depicting Onol and Gigin each contributing to the creation of the first dwarf. Ousire put her wages into funding a lot of it despite actually being a Deleran. I can see why, though; the iron dwarf-child held by Onol bears resemblance to the unfortunate Miss Mirrorcastles.

23rd Obsidian, 353

Someone's dismantled a part of the machinery that Fath and the other mechanics have been working on. A section of the wooden framework has been ripped out, something we cannot replace until spring when the Elven caravan arrives.

25th Obsidian, 353

A large portion of the platinum stores has been stolen. The guard is doing a village-wide search at this point.

27th Obsidian, 353

The missing mason, the stolen wood and the platinum have all been found and all of them remade into something new. It appears Zas retreated to the bauxite quarry and made use of the old blockery station there, carving the native platinum into a statue of Onol the Tin

Silver holding up a dwarf supposedly made from steel but actually carved out of platinum. As some sort of personal joke, Zas has depicted the created dwarf as Onol, himself holding up another smaller dwarf (who holds up a tiny dwarf, who fortunately is only holding up his hands as if holding up yet another dwarf but instead holds a vaguely dwarf-shaped doll). All three Onols have eyes and articles of clothing carved from polished tower-cap wood (much of the original axle was wasted, it appears) and inexplicably at the base of the statue are depicted two tiny cows carved out of goblin femurs. Perhaps this was some sort of indication of scale?

Zas has demonstrated remarkable skill in its production and displays an almost charismatic level of confidence now. So confident, in fact, that Emerin pardoned him for the vandalism of a community project and the theft of a large quantity of precious metals. In exchange, the village has 'claimed' the statue for the community. A little disconcertingly, the statue itself is actually worth slightly less than the entire value of the rest of the village by my calculations.

Let's just hope the goblins don't hear about this.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 29, 2009, 07:34:08 pm**

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28th Obsidian, 353

Kel sat at the edge of the southeastern slope, periodically swigging from a tightly-sealed bottle. His eye twitched involuntarily from time to time, a relic of the attempts to ferment snakeman venom into the rage brew. While it had briefly filled him with euphoric anger (a handful of crushed desert scorpions had borne brief and intimate witness to the results), he had enjoyed about a fortnight of continual headaches and stomach cramps, the worst of which were just beginning to let up. Kel rubbed his face in an effort to calm the tics and nodded to Fora as she clambered up the slope and sat down beside him.

"We're putting the last one in now," she said. "How did you manage to get them forged without Danielle noticing? She watches the work rotas like a hawk."

"Bribed the metalworkers to slip in an extra shift. That smelter girl needed firecaps for something, probably that little tribute she did," said Kel. "Our dear pirate friend helped us out again."

"Damn it, Kel. You said we weren't going to do any more thefts, people will notice!"

"Not so much theft as looting," said Kel after a moment's consideration. "Kadol had a bit of a stash buried away. Yngwie did too. Our girl's good at finding buried treasure." *Hopefully not too good*, he added to himself, thinking of his journals.

"You paid for a dead girl's memorial using her own stolen savings? I've got to be honest, Kel, that's just wrong."

Kel shrugged and took another swig from his bottle, slapping his eye to stop the twitching.

"Means and ends, Fora. Means and ends. A necessary action to bring about the sixth shrine."

"Sixth shrine?"

"Aye. Have you not noticed? One to each of the gods here now, each of Them making Their presence felt. Onol atop His would-be pillar of fire, lording it over the rest. Gigin surrounded by the fallen, relishing in their suffering while not a street away Nakas sings and dances and dares ignore the misery in the world with bright lights and liquor. Nish sits in Her gaudy throne, eternally reaching for the ever-distant dream of Wealth while below everyone's feet Deler slinks around in the dark, waiting." Kel made a grand, satirical gesture towards the brass pillars on the plateau below them.

"So here we are," he said, "completing the set. A dream given form, an anchor for one formless and removed, moreso even than the others. In the end, do you reckon it will matter, Fora? Do you suppose it will even make a difference?"

"If anyone can make a difference," said Fora, "surely it would be the gods."

"Surely," murmured Kel. "Though these pillars were not wrought by Zas' hand."

He stood up and stoppered his drink tucking the bottle into his belt. Kel squeezed Fora's shoulder lightly and managed a half-grin before trudging back toward the village. Fora shook her head and gazed at the finished shrine, the shadowed figures who had erected the last pillar paling in comparison to the brilliant brass standards, gleaming in the filtered light of the moon. She stared at the icon at the centre, not quite as it had been in the dream but close enough for the concept to come to life for her, heightened by the senses of reality.

Cool, crisp air filled her lungs as she breathed in, touched faintly by the aroma of roasting hound from the village kitchens and the welcoming scent of fermenting bourbon at the stills. She wanted to run up to the pillars and run her hands over the cold, polished metal, basking in the concrete proof of their existence. The night was near silent save the distant flowing of the wind, a stillness of the air that only served to accentuate the scrabbling behind her.

Fora spun around quickly, her eyes darting across the barren plain.

Nothing could be seen but the stones.

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Olonkulet after three years. (<http://www.mkv25.net/dfma/map-5923-gearabbey>s)

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - The Six Shrines (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Kel the Oblivious** on **May 30, 2009, 03:07:28 am**

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Beautiful. All I can say. Pragmatic bastard with his feet on the ground.

Paying for it with a dead girl's caps? Not like she needs them.

And when will my happy little following come face to face with the horrors that hide in their shadows?

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 30, 2009, 05:37:43 am**

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#### Chapter Four: War Machine

12th Granite, 353

The mood in the Beerhall that evening was at best subdued and at worst mournful. Dwarves nursed mugs and wounds alike and wore their throats thin trying to answer the question on everyone's lips:

"What happened?"

"I was only there for the first part," grunted Broose, one of the few dwarves who had come out of the events unscathed. He sat at one of the corner tables, trying to explain what had happened to Frey and Emerin.

"You'll get my report later," he continued, "but the first we heard of it was the pit traps firing and the hounds baying, same as usual. We need bleeding watchmen on the walls. So these goblin slaves rush in and get caught up fighting off the dogs long enough for the kid with the weird spear to get onto the scene..."

"<Get off me, you stupid mutt!>" shouted Ngoso as he repeatedly punched the hound's eyes. The dog's jaw had locked on his leg and refused to let go while bolts hurtled through the air around him, both from the marksgoblins behind firing at the dogs and the two marksdwarves that had arrived firing at the marksgoblins. Acutely aware of his precarious position, he finally managed to shake the dog loose and turned just in time to receive a spearblade through his chest. The blade twisted, Ngoso spasmed and he fell.

Khain wrenched the spear out of the goblin's chest and raised his shield against the hail of bolts from both sides. Struggling against the grip of a third slave fighter, Khain stabbed the wretch in the leg, then again and again through the chest until it lay still. About him Datan and the guardsman Ascubis ran forward, axe and flail in hand to fight the foes. Datan charged the marksgoblins and the dwarf that led them, grabbing the latter by the shoulder and throwing him bodily into one of the pits. Success! A captured prisoner! As reward, Datan received a bolt glancing across his belly and was staggered. He glanced down and praised Gigin; a sharp gash ran along the leather, missing his flesh by a hair's breadth.

Ragna did not fare so well, the bolt that struck her piercing the flesh above her hip by half an inch. The strength of the blow made her throw up and forced her to retreat back into the fort. The marksgoblins stoof their ground and fired until one met a swift death at Khain's spear and the other a prolonged and messy one at the brutal bludgeoning of Ascubis' flail.

"I broke off then," finished Broose. "Quiver was emptied, figured I had better resupply. Khain, dumb fool, was in high spirits and opted to do a quick scouting run by himself to check for stragglers. My fault for letting him go, was in command, but nothing to be done with that now. When the rest of it played out, I was still in the damned armoury stocking up on fresh bolts."

"So I went scouting," said Khain, lifting a mug with his good arm. "Got jumped by a full squad of gobbers and another of those stotting traitors. I yell out for help, but there are four of the bastards firing at me and I go all red in the eyes and start charging them. Stupid, stupid..."

Khain managed to spear the advancing slavegoblin through the shoulder, crying out for help from the other militiadwarves. The enemy sergeant, a traitor dwarf in jade uniform, barked commands in goblin to the marksgoblins raining bolts upon the speardwarf. One struck Khain hard in the bicep, eliciting a shriek. Instinct told Khain he could fight no longer, so he butted the slave in the temple with the spear haft and ran as quickly as he could, cradling his spear and mangled arm as the crossbow fire rained upon the nearby plain, leaving pockmarks in the stone.

"Hold on!" came a cry from the north. Khain spared a brief turn of the head as he ran and spied Jora and Goden running towards the squad. *Brave but few*, he cursed inwardly. *Where the hell are the others?*

Goden fired a single bolt towards the row of marksgoblins before a bolt sundered his knee and he went to ground. The bolt flew true and lodged itself neatly in a marksgoblin's throat, the victim slumping to the ground and gurgling to his grave. Jora leapt after the slave, slicing away his limbs in her signature move and beginning to strike at the marksgoblin corps when she felt a sharp pain in her arm and saw the blood leaking from the wound.

"It was the first time she ever actually got hit," said Khain darkly. "For all she showboats, she's always had armour on her side, never been faced by insane odds before. Well, she broke. Ran for the walls, the coward, while I had to watch them put bolt after bolt into his body..."

Khain broke up, rubbing his eyes with his working hand and then cradling the mess of bandaging, plaster and poultice covering the ruins of his other arm. Kulet, having no words, refilled his mug with ale in a gesture of dwarven solidarity. Khain sniffed and accepted it.

"Then the other squad showed up."

"Everything went mad at that point," Ascubis explained to Stug and Ousire. "We heard Khain's cry and grabbed things to go assist, but nobody saw the other squad approaching. They opened fire straight up on the guard dogs and the slave goblins charged straight over the triggered pits. The only one there to answer was the captain, still hurting from that bolt to the gut.

"Well, she answered the cry anyway. Captain ran straight into the fray, sword at hand, and cut the guts from the first two slaves in two neat slices. Then this other gobber? He's beating up on a kid, taking his time, the bastard. So she charges at him, bolts from his backup flying all around her and runs him through. The prick's eyeballs practically burst from their head, I'll tell you that. She heads straight for the marksgobbers after that and *I swear* she kicked that traitor leading them into one of the trap pits *without even touching him*.

"Well, the gobbers broke and ran after that. One of them got away, but the other got sight of Khain struggling away from the battle and tried to give him a parting shot, so *bam!* I got in there with the flail, bone splinters and brains all over the battlefield!" Ascubis leant back with a satisfied grin and drained his mug. "Shame about Goden, though."

The doors swung open and all heads turned to Captain Ragna, freshly washed and bandaged and looking like the wrath of the gods. She pointed roughly at Broose, Stug, Ascubis and Frey.

"You, you, you and you," she commanded. "Finish your drinks. It's time we interrogated the prisoners."

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Boksi** on **May 30, 2009, 08:58:11 am**

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Is it exposition time yet?

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 30, 2009, 10:25:06 am**

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The dwarves entered the cell block, where the two dwarven soldiers and the goblin slave captured during the attack were manacled to the wall. Ragna picked up the gaol's latrine bucket and threw the contents over the prisoners.

"Start talking!" she commanded. "I want to know who you are, where you're from and what in Onol's name you're doing here!"

"Good for you," muttered one of the dwarves, spitting urine off his lips. "We're not talking!"

"Is that so, corporal?" said Ragna, noting the rank on the uniform. She looked to the other. "You, sergeant?" The other dwarf remained silent and stared directly ahead, not even responding.

"He won't talk!" jeered the corporal, "and neither will I! Not even over torture!"

"Oh, you think we'd sink to that, do you? So used to hanging around greenskins you've forgotten how real dwarves act? You miserable excuse for a traitor, you should be ashamed."

"Ashamed? That's rich coming from a bunch of elf-lovers. Or worse, cowards. At least we had the stones to fight back, at least we didn't run!"

"No, you sold your souls to gobbers instead! Have you started wholesale cannibalism yet, or are they weaning you into it a finger at time?"

The corporal spat at Ragna aggressively, but the sergeant remained silent, staring at a fixed point on the wall. The captain threw up her hands.

"Some of us remember what it is to be a dwarf. Loyalty, justice. Compassion. We don't kill our brothers and we *don't* make friends with gobbers. Well, you'll be fed and watered. Maybe you'll soften up after a few weeks here. Guards, put them back in their- *what the hell are you doing, Frey?*"

Frey strode nonchalantly toward the corporal, pick-axe in hand.

"Hey!" shouted the corporal, eyeing the advancing miner. "What's he doing? I don't like - *aaaaaargh!*"

Frey wrenched the pick out of the corporal's leg, inspected it carefully, then drove it back in again.

"Oh gods, what are you doing!"

Frey ripped downward and then struck at the dwarf's limbs with precision, rending flesh and cracking bones and singing the 'hi-ho' song whilst he did it.

"Aaaugh! The pain!"

*"Hi-ho, hi-ho-"*

"Please stop!"

*"-it's off to work we go-"*

"Why won't anyone help me?!"

*"-with a shovel and a pick I'll make this quick-"* Frey held the pick up above the bleeding dwarf.

"You promise?" he cried desperately.

"No," confessed Frey and drove the pick into the corporal's hand.

*"Aaaaargh!"*

*"Hi-ho,"* he sang, driving the pick into a different limb with each syllable, *"hi-ho-hi-ho hi-ho..."*

Another shriek filled the cells to the horror of all onlookers, this time from the chained goblin, who began screeching desperately in his native tongue. Frey drew the pick out of the bloodied and soon-to-be unconscious mangled heap of a corporal and turned to Stug, who had rushed over to the goblin.

"What's he saying?" asked Frey.

"Will talk," said Stug. "Asks not hurt."

"Get him to tell you what's going on. What these dwarves are doing here, where he's from."

"Says dwarves with head dwarf," said Stug in between questioning the prisoner rapidly in the harsh goblin dialect. "General... Rock-crusher?"

"Stonebreaker," growled Broose. "Keep going, kid."

"Dwarves make war-friends with *togu*- goblins, command army. General set up big camp in desert, away from Queen Elf. Wage war against other dwarves. Looking for town, wants to take, make fortress. Start own kingdom."

"Alright," said Frey. "Stug, take the goblin away and give him some water and food, keep him on the chain so he doesn't get away. Get details from him. Numbers, troop movements, how big the camp is and how it's set out. As much as you can. Ascubis, Broose, get these dwarves back to their cages and try and patch the corporal up as much as you can."

"As for you," said Ragna stiffly to him, "My office, right now."

"What the hell were you doing in there?" Ragna shouted.

"Cleaning up your mess," said Frey. "You made a pig's ear of that interrogation."

"I didn't bloody torture them, you maniac!"

"No, you made it necessary for *me* to torture them. First up, you completely failed to isolate your subjects. The corporal could've broken if the sergeant hadn't been there for him to draw support from. Second, you didn't bother establishing any rapport. You didn't make the subjects identify with you, you didn't make them inclined to talk - hell, you actually made them adversarial with that stunt with the piss bucket."

"Look, I-"

"And there's another thing! You let them talk! *Never* let them talk until they're willing to give you the information you need. Never let them protest, never let them finish a protest because it gives them confidence. You gave them no real incentives to talk when they were the best shot we had at gaining intelligence. An interrogation isn't a chance to force your personal philosophy, captain, it's something you do to get information."

"Oh, and your stunt with the pickaxe really worked! The sergeant still didn't talk!"

"The sergeant was never going to talk in that situation, captain. It's going to take me weeks to get anything out of him now and I had to ruin the bloody corporal to get the information I was after."



"Why? You said he was the one most willing to talk."

"He was, but attacking the sergeant would only have made him more resolute and I don't speak goblin well enough to communicate motivation. It worked, crudely. Frightened the damn slave enough to get him to sing, but he only possesses basic intelligence. I would have preferred to interrogate the corporal, but we don't have the luxury of time. We *need* what the sergeant knows and thanks to you we might never get it."

Frey turned to leave but Ragna grabbed him by the shoulder.

"Where the hell do you think you're going? I'm arresting you for stotting torture, you madman."

"Oh really? You think you can- No, wait. That's brilliant."

"What? You want to go to gaol?"

"Just make sure my cage is next to that sergeant's, aye. Look, you want to punish me for what you forced me into doing? Be my guest, but make it constructive. I can at least take a shot at getting what we need from that sergeant while I'm in there."

"I can't believe you- You know what? Fine. Rot in there, I don't care. So long as I don't have to look at you. Turn around, I'm going to bind your hands."

Frey chuckled and did so, commenting as she tied a threadmoss rope around his wrists.

"See you in six months."

"Try a year, you bastard."

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Aldaris** on **May 30, 2009, 11:51:04 am**

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I can already imagine that torture scene as a movie.  
Good move at bringing the fact most of these guys are convicts back to the foreground without breaking the flow of the story.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **May 30, 2009, 01:09:52 pm**

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*Ragna's notes*

Dammit, I havent been this badly wounded for a while. Least i can still walk. We need more training and soldiers, that battle was terrible. We also need better organization. Gotta interrogate those prisoners.

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Gods dammit Frey. Why did he have to do that? I know HOW to torture people properly, and how to get them to talk. Hell, ive lived through some of those methods myself! I just hate USING them. Least we got some decent information, and Frey will be out of sight for a while; maybe he'll cool down. Seems like the resident's criminal pasts are surfacing again. Must stay alert. Must watch stockpiles also; stuff has been disappearing again.

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Stug's made advancements learning Dwarven, and i even saw him writing a journal a few days ago. He's also become a fairly competent translator of Goblin to Dwarf.

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That dark edge i felt in the Force is back. It had disappeared when we had started building the shrines, but its back now, and it rasps across my nerves. It worries me; it seems to be getting stronger.

So, is Ragna strong enough to still move? Or is she hospitalized?

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 30, 2009, 02:29:56 pm**

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Oh, she's good after a few days of vomiting blood. Khain'll be bedridden for months, though - mangled left arm.

Not a whole lot is happening in the fort right now, which means you'll be getting 'filler' things like plot and character development instead.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Keita** on **May 30, 2009, 02:35:59 pm**

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holy...carp

I'm copying these and making them into a book, they fugging rock

Journal of Khain:  
Damn, my arm is smashed to pieces! I hope this heals, otherwise I'm only gonna be useful at lugging things around and Goden...poor poor Goden. I hope he finds peace.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Aldaris** on **May 30, 2009, 03:05:19 pm**

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Book? How about a movie?  
Seriously, if we got the makers of the big forts to put their posts together into a single document and edit the lot of it for slightly better story flow and minor mistakes you could sell that as a series.  
Each fort it's own little book.

Problem is, the damn things would have to fall first. Except maybe Nist Akath, that's a series of it's own.

I'd buy both Nist Akath or Olonkulet if they were ever novelized, although I'm not sure how many others would, especially non-DF fans.

Still epic as always.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 30, 2009, 05:28:19 pm**

Don't take this the wrong way, but I wouldn't (for Olonkulet). Not yet, at any rate. If I can ever polish off serialised fiction techniques maybe, but right now I'm having to improvise a lot when things come up ingame and it shows. The format lacks the advantages of a novel or similar work - you don't have a lot of time to draft and redraft if you want to meet the thrice-weekly (or daily!) schedule for serial work that would put you on par with, say, webcomics.

Which is not to say I'm not going to try! I've just not been overzealously happy with the way that last chapter turned out, so I'm going to take a while to do some heavy design work and see if I can't tune this up a bit. Updates will continue as expected.

Also, Kanute, would you mind awfully if I delayed your character until the Baron eventually arrives? Would work easier and better if I can start him off as a trader right away with a shop, which I need the economy active for.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **May 30, 2009, 11:54:11 pm**

well this was interesting O\_o i like the fact that he sang will attacking, just adds that little insane fun to the thing! ;D and now that we were so badly attacked, is this when the walls and traps start to appear? >\_>

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Kel the Oblivious** on **May 31, 2009, 02:57:54 am**

A small chalk slab, smaller then the rest. On it are stylized images of the six shrines, a dwarf being struck down, and Kel's own rendition of the torture scene. It was different, involving a thin dagger, and what looks like the removal of flesh one square inch at a time.

*Journal of Kel Ragebrew*

*I spoke with Fora a while back. She was distressed that I would use the funds of the dead to make it so their memorial would be good. Not like she will need them in the here after... None of them will. And just having all the caps returned to the communal coffer does little good outside of make it so we don't have to dry out as many caps to keep even currency wise. I have had supper in there. We can afford to grow a couple extra stacks.*

*I had been far outside when the goblins had attacked. I thank my lucky stones that I was far enough away they did not notice the dusty figure picking through shrubs. If worse had come to worse, I still have my axe. My skills may be rusty, but I know I could take down a couple before dying myself. Maybe I should enlist into the military, show these softies how I survived for months on the run through a haunted swamp. Although I think that is bad idea at the same time... Someone might get hurt. One death is already attributed to me, if indirectly. I do not want to make one of our few defenders a bed ridden sap on resources. Or become one myself.*

*I returned just in time to be in the beer hall when the good captain Ragna took a few of her chosen and went to wrestle some information out of our turn coats. While not in the room myself, I did get it quite clearly. If anything, poor bastard got what was coming to him. When I hear that we have learned everything of use from them, I will offer these thirsty soldiers a drink. I still have enough snakeman venom to make it their last one. I will stay my hand until I KNOW they are no longer of use besides consuming resources and taking up room in the prison. Cold hearted, yes, indwarven, yes. Justified, oh yes. I know the moment they are found dead, there will be a man hunt to find whoever did the deed. I will be sure to burn the barrel one shard at a time. I will use one of the copper flasks I had comissioned and hold the vile green substance in it. I will just have to make sure I know what one it is. Maybe a drawing of a nightshadow plant. Like nightshade, only with thorns and roots that seem to cling to you. I know no one here will know what it is. Or at least I hope.*

*(A couple of doodles cover the space between, all of them drawings of the same plant)*

*I could have become an engraver here... Oh well, no matter. I may be good with the stick, but chisel and hammer? Maybe no so much. Oh well. The night grows old, and I grow tired.*

Kel rose from his bed and made his way outside, basking in the cold night air, letting the wisps of his breath dance before him before fading off into nothingness. For a long moment he stood there, chalk slab under his arm, before walking off to his hiding spot. He had to dig it deeper, and was almost to the bare stone beneath. "I will need a new stash hole..." He muttered under his breath, before digging it out, placing the slab tenderly within, and burying it once more. With a whistle and a soft drumming on the matching flasks hanging from his belt, the medicine dwarf did a few laps around the wall before turning in for the night, passing by the nightwatchmen with a simple statement of "I swear sometimes I feel like an elf. I need a nice walk under the stars before bed. Too much time above the earth, am I right?" He shared a chuckle and finished his rounds, returning to his bed to fall into a deep sleep.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Kanute** on **May 31, 2009, 01:09:32 pm**

Whatever works best for the story!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community/Fugitives)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 31, 2009, 06:03:28 pm**

Alright, actual fort events are quite slim in the coming year (I play ahead a bit, then wrap storyline aronud events), so to keep the pace of action, a lot of the next year will be set outside of the fort and in the surrounding regions. I'll be aiming to bring characters from within the fort out of the fort to help with that, as well as working on internal events and how those characters that remain at home will react.

If anyone wants to pick a character that exists outside the fortress, this would be a good time. Be warned that said character is more or less at my mercy and will likely never get into the fortress proper - this is the equivalent of Adventurer Mode storyline, save that aside from *possibly* fight sequences this will largely be happening outside of the DF engine.

Update schedule is pulling back to the stated once per two days line, which means an update sometime tomorrow and then Wednesday and Friday after that. This sequence is going to take a fair bit of planning and storyboarding to get right. The good news is, there will be ASCII art to go with it.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **May 31, 2009, 06:10:10 pm**

so this means that most stuff is outside, but we will get occasional cuts back into the fort to see what happens to those who stay?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Petra** on **May 31, 2009, 06:59:51 pm**

Dwarf Request: Petra  
Skills: Hammerer +3, Shield +3, Armor User +3, Miner +1

Bit o' Backstory:

Petra came from a middle class family. Her father was a simple mason and her mother was a speardwarf.

Crime: When Petra joined the militia she learned how to use a hammer. When her commander tried to get too close she smashed in his head on accident. She was arrested and sentenced to 10 years of hard labor and sent to the mountain homes to work in the salt mines. (OR something. I dunno.)

Likes: Hammers and bronze and red sand.  
Dislikes: Firecaps. And spiders. She don't like spiders much.

BY all means, do what you like with Petra.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Nirur Torir** on **May 31, 2009, 07:03:48 pm**

Good story, I'd like to claim a non-fortress dwarf. Nirur Torir is a (stereotypically) traditional dwarf, deeply troubled by recent events. He's a battle scarred warrior, and always carries his large battle hammer around with him. He thinks that you're all loony for building up, unlike proper dwarves. He thinks that the elven leader is even loonier, and escaped at the first possible opportunity.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Kel the Oblivious** on **May 31, 2009, 09:19:35 pm**

Urist "Gemeye" Ironweave

Skills: Spear +3 shield +3, Armor user +3, Ambusher +1

History: A valiant veteran, who managed to go AWOL from General Stonebreaker's army, and began a one dwarf war against the goblins. He refuses to accept the elven queen as his ruler, citing ancient dwarven tradition of killing elves who offended the dwarves with orders of "Cut down less trees, shorty" He has had to survive by hunting and killing animals. He carries a few slabs of stone, so he can set up a butcher shop where he needs to.

His left eye was removed by a stray goblin arrow. He did not go down after the nearly fatal blow, and contiuned to fight until the last goblin was routed. He was given a ornately carved peridot in place of it.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Enzo** on **June 01, 2009, 03:13:26 pm**

Still loving this. If you're doing a 'filler arc' I'd like to request some more stuff with Datan, because he is entertaining for some obscure reason. And since he visits Olonkulet annually he could tie the events happening outside back to the fort...

Also, it's been a while since we've seen him so I should probably drop one of these...

*Urgashs' Log*

*Dani's been acting more'n strange lately. At first I held the assumption that it'were stress at work, but more'n more she's even leaving her little book at home, what which she uses for business with the sums from cover t'cover. So I'm of the understandin' it can't be work - she honestly seems to like her job, which confuses me of itself. The only work I ever done with a book was rebindin' the cover. Seems a relationship tends to run smooth, though, when you have no expectation for understandin' one another. Lately I've been of the mind she's having a conflict of faith, that or she has a problem with my bein' a casual Nakasian... comments 'bout such have been slippin' through her beard on occasion.*

*Nothing to worry over, I'm sure. Lately it seems I'm the only dwarf in the desert not worried over something. Theft, Goblins, Famine, Hallucinations, Elf Queens... You name it, I've heard it muttered across a goblet in the mess hall. As for me, though, things are looking up. Apprentices are trained in most of my crafts...they're nearly adept enough now to make a waterskin and an earring without wasting a whole cow in the process. Most of my time these days is simply spent feedin' the dogs - both military and domestic, we have quite a pack now - practicing at my hobby soapworks, and cooking meals for our (uncommonly frequent, even by dwarven standards) feasts and parties. This is more of a retirement than most dwarves dream for and, if I dare utter the words, this place almost feels like home.*

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **June 01, 2009, 05:41:06 pm**

*18th Granite, 354*

The Elven caravan trudged through the town silently as dwarves turned from their work to watch. Several of the packbeasts were wounded and bound with poultices and wrappings and the normally clean and graceful elves bore scuff-marks on their colourful clothing and dour, serious expressions. One or two had dried flecks of blood on their coats and their polished wooden swords still had traces of blood in the grain where it had failed to wash out completely. When the rest of the traders were busy unpacking their wares in the Nishan chapel, the leader was invited by Emerin to take some wine and talk of what had happened.

"We were attacked by raiders," said the elf, whom Emerin recognised as the trader Nisa. "Goblins, but led by dwarves. We feared a similar response arriving here, but had no choice but to stop for supplies. I am glad we are received with hospitality."

"Thank you. They are being led by a dwarf named Stonebreaker," Emerin explained. "He has attacked us also." Nisa nodded.

"As the humans of Gibdur. We saw the remains of some of their wagons along the trade route. The raiders that attacked us came with cages and chains. Slavers. Your people should best be wary, as should the dwarves who live in the desert."

"We will. Do your elves require any other assistance?"

"No. We will handle ourselves."

"What did you do with the human bodies?"

"We did not know them, and the corpses were fresh. They were disposed of in an ethical manner." Nisa picked his teeth absently and Emerin felt a sudden disinclination to pursue that line of questioning.

"I fear some of our animals were slain during the attack," Nisa continued, "so we have less to trade than we otherwise might, including a bear from the coast. We did pick up something from the remains of the human caravan." He produced a small scroll case.

"We offer you this, separate from our trade goods, for a week's food and water for our company."

"What is it?"

"Maps," said Nisa, "of this region and those surrounding it. I do not believe you have any? We navigate by the stars, but they are accurate enough. The map contains a place we did not know of." He produced one of the maps from the scroll and pointed to a marking surrounded by three small lakes. An illegible name was scrawled next to it in human script. "I do not know the name, but we have never encountered it upon our travels."

"Danielle might be able to read it, she's good with languages."

"You accept our trade, then?"

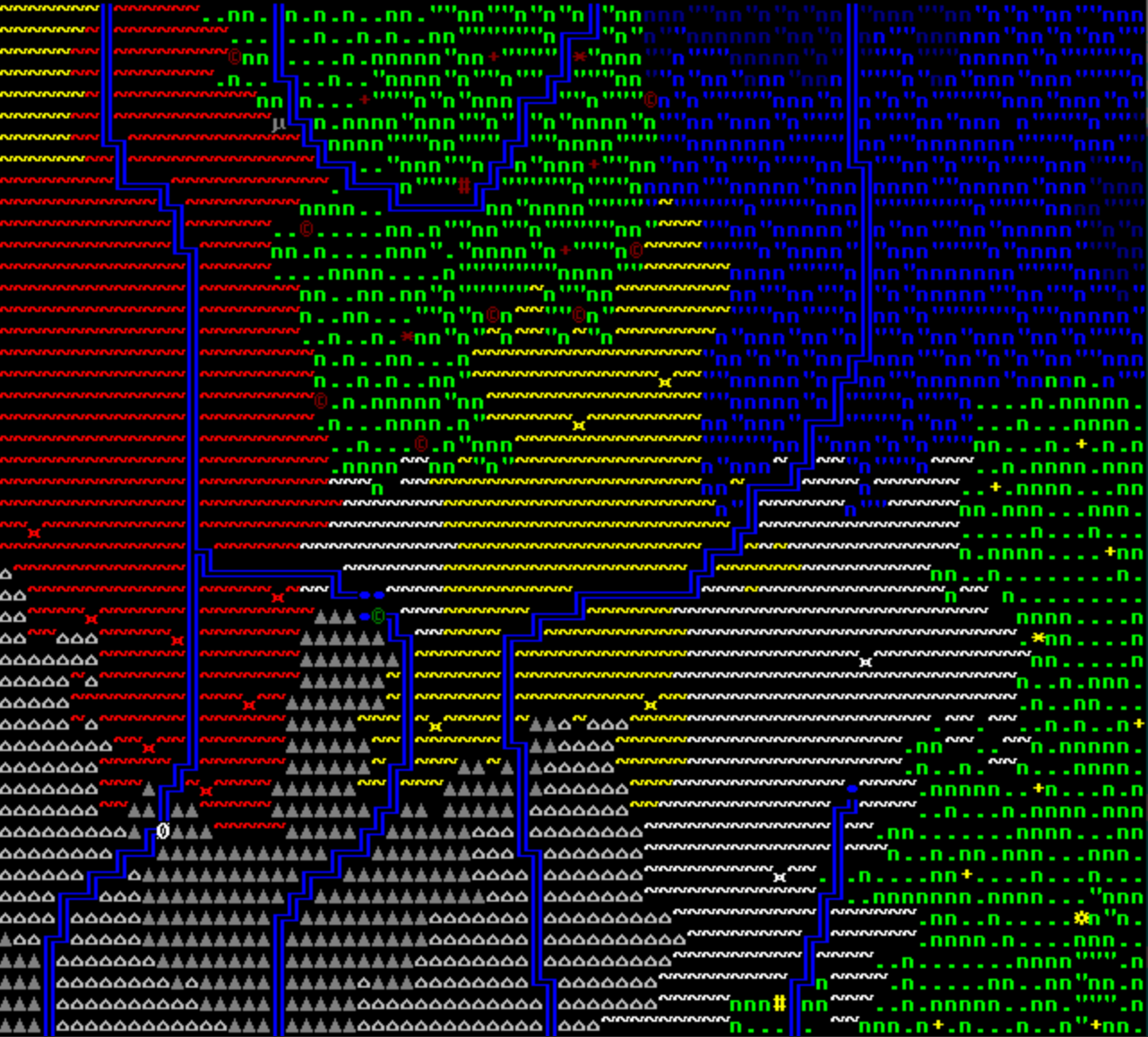
"Please, no," said Nisa quickly, raising a hand. His face paled slightly. "We cannot be certain that the wood in your beds was ethically obtained, you understand. Our purity would be compromised to accept it. Your other offers of hospitality are more than acceptable."

"Very well. Now, allow me to see those maps."

Spoiler: Region Legends Map (click to show/hide)



Spoiler: Settlements Map (No names) (click to show/hide)



Spoiler: Settlements Map (Names) (click to show/hide)





Also, requests taken note of. Especially for Datan. I'll see where I can fit him in.

Can't wait for Danielle's assessment of the maps; I'm curious about how the sietches are handling themselves, and the like.

I love the way you portray elves in your story, you are able to keep the creepy cannibal hippy and also the mystic protectors of the forest, an aspect often left out of other portrayals.

**Title: Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
**Post by: Enzo on June 01, 2009, 08:37:54 pm**

Quote from: Iituem on June 01, 2009, 05:41:06 pm

Olonkulet is not called Olonkulet by the humans at this point, or in fact anyone else.

...

Also, requests taken note of. Especially for Datan. I'll see where I can fit him in.

Awesome :) I am pleased about Datan. And does this mean you have grand plans for the naming of the site? I edited my journal slightly because it's true; no one has used the O word yet. The site itself is shaping up nicely too. How many dwarves are we housing now?

**Title: Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
**Post by: Jim Groovester on June 01, 2009, 10:25:55 pm**

Alright, I'll take another character for the overland side stories.

Nickname: Brickbeard  
Real Name: Whatever the RNG comes up with. Hopefully something menacing.  
Profession: Highwaydwarf  
In game profession: Marksdwarf, Intimidator  
Description: Brickbeard was the head of a group of bandits that was often hired during times of war to disrupt and steal from supply caravans to enemy lines. In times of peace, he sold the services of his group to various criminal enterprises. One female dwarf by the name of Nireme hired the group in the heist of Duchess Likot's prized diamond necklace, the Glint of the Morning. They successfully stole the necklace, but the following morning, Nireme and the necklace was nowhere to be found when Duchess Likot's personal forces surrounded Brickbeard's camp. Many were killed, many were apprehended, but Brickbeard shot his way through the Duchess' forces and escaped. Figuring Nireme sold his troupe to the river, he vowed revenge. In the meantime, he's picked up his ways of banditry once more, albeit on a far smaller scale.

**Title: Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
**Post by: Iituem on June 03, 2009, 08:10:58 am**

*20th Granite, 354*

"Still doing the hunger strike?" Frey asked through the bars of his cage. The sergeant sat motionless in the neighbouring cell, arms folded and eyes closed. The goblin prisoners were sleeping and the captured corporal had been moved elsewhere for medical treatment.

"He'll live, you know," Frey continued, heedless of the stubborn silence from his audience. "I did a lot of that during the war with the Green Monsters, I'm quite good at it. I imagine you know what I mean, you're a veteran of a few yourself, aren't you?"

Silence.

"Serve with old Stonebreaker back then? I guess I can understand why you'd stick around. The captain was a cruel, heartless bastard, but he kept you alive if you stuck by him. I guess when the world turns upside down, you just go with what's familiar, right?"

Silence.

"So, you going to keep stonewalling me, or are you going to give me a name? Otherwise I shall keep calling you 'Cog'. No? Suit yourself, Cog. I'll leave you a portion of my chow if you get hungry in the night." Frey slid a little cup of the unappetising prison mush through the bars, as he had each night of the week before. He was met with customary silence.

"Well, it's been a lovely talk as always. Goodnight, Cog."

Frey leant back in his cell and closed his eyes, drifting to dreams of another life. When he awoke, the sergeant was still sat in his cell, unresponsive. He did take heart, however, at the fact that the cup of brown chow was finally emptied.

*21st Granite, 354*

"Have question," said Stug over a bowl of brown chow and wild maize gruel. Ragna looked up from her morning ale and nodded for him to proceed.

"Talk lots about Justice," he continued, "not explain well. Say 'no take from others, not just'. Also not law, but say do because not just as well as because not law. In job, stop dwarf hitting other, 'not just' and not law. If law cover crime, what justice mean?"

"That's one of the big problems," Ragna admitted, grooming the ale froth from her beard. "It's difficult to explain. Justice is about the natural order of things, about putting things in their place."

"So... you do what told?"

"No, no. It goes above people telling other people what to do."

"You do what gods tell you?"

"Not really that either. The gods aren't exactly particularly just. It wasn't particularly 'just' for Onol to turn his brother into oil or Zas into a dream when they lost the contest to create the dwarves. Justice is about fair treatment, about treating others as you wish you were treated yourself."

"So why you worship Onol if He not just?"

"Well, I respect what He is, the fact that for His faults He did create the dwarven race-"

"So you worship because strong, not just," said Stug, comprehending with a satisfied smile. "As my people."

"No, we are nothing like-"

"Nish is wealth, yes? Only some can be rich, only so many firecaps. Worship Nish for wealth, but is rich fair? Gigin not treat others as want treated - you want be killed? You eat dog - you want be eaten?"

"No, no, no," dismissed Ragna. "You can't apply justice to gods or animals, Stug."

"So justice not for those stronger than, or for those weaker than? Justice only for 'us'?"

"Now hold on-"

"*Togu* way different." Stug dipped his spoon into the bowl of gruel. "All born slave, all dirt." He raised the spoon, much of the watery gruel dripping back into the bowl. "Many stay. All *can* rise. Only few be strong, but earned. All respect strength because want strength. Do not resent place. Dwarves strange. Some born high, some born low. Those high stay high without earning, those low stay low, do not try to rise. Resent place but content with, instead hate those higher. Make excuses for inability." Stug frowned and dropped the

spoon back into the bowl. "Confuses. Seem 'justice' make dwarven people weak all way through. Weak stay weak, strong made guilty, held back. Strong work for weak, are weakened by."

Ragna opened her mouth to protest, but found herself unable to answer. Stug had almost certainly understood wrongly, but there was truth to his words. Dwarven society was not known for its mobility - if you were born a hauler, you would be lucky if you ever rose to crafts dwarfship. If you were born a noble, you need never work. How could she defend a system like that?

As she pondered, Stug finished his breakfast and nodded to her as he left for morning patrols.

"Will consider. Thank for talk."

*23rd Granite, 354*

"Hail!" called Ascubis as the dwarf approached, breathless from running. "What brings you to our town?"

"Slavers," breathed the dwarf hoarsely. "They're raiding Catchwater! We need aid!"

Not ten minutes later the dwarf, whose name was Lokum, hustled back down the mountain's sandy slope with three of the town's best; Broose, Jora and Datan. The captain and guardsdwarves had stayed to protect the town. Even at a hastened pace the journey took over an hour of hurried marching before the four arrived at the sietch, its entrance marked by six standing stones. There were signs of battle and track marks leading into the desert, including a crumpled form in the sands. Lokum cried out in dismay and rushed forward to it, finding to his relief that it was merely the body of a goblin slave.

"They're moving by wagon," said Jora, studying the tracks. "We can catch up to them if we start going."

"Quickly, though," added Datan, pressing a palm to the corpse. "Meat's gone lukewarm and it's starting to stiffen, so they left a good half hour ago at least."

"Check for casualties," ordered Broose. "Jora, keep watch up here and be ready to leave. Datan, you and Lokum are with me, let's see if anyone is still here."

The three dwarves descended the narrow sietch staircase and shook a glowbulb to life as they left the thin shaft of light streaming down the burrow entrance. The fight had started in the sietch itself and Broose judged by the thin sprays of blood on the walls and the trail leading up the stairwell that the goblin outside had suffered his blow belowground and crawled out only to die from the wound. A row of bedrooms flanked the entry corridor on the left; one was missing its thin stone door.

Lokum blanched as his eyes adjusted to the dim light and turned to one side, emptying the contents of his stomach onto the dry sand. Datan side-stepped swiftly to avoid it, peering into the darkness until he saw the cause of the reaction. A dog lay slaughtered in the hallway, its innards strewn across the floor and one of its hind legs hacked off. Its tongue lolled from its jaws in an almost comical fashion, save where the nose had been caved in. Datan wrinkled his own nose at the sight.

"You want I should look after the kid?" he asked.

"No," said Broose. "Stay here and watch the exit, Lokum's coming with me." He frowned at a faint blueish light at the end of the corridor. The glowbulbs set into the sietch walls had been smashed during the attack and gave no light. He cocked his bow and knelt to take aim, but Lokum quickly placed a hand on his.

"The glowcaps are fruiting," he explained. "That's just the farm." Broose nodded and raised the bow, creeping carefully forward and pointing his bow down the hallway to the right.

"Is anyone there?" he called out. Receiving no response, he turned the corner and looked around until he saw the missing bedroom door wedged tightly into a doorway. Broose guessed at a barricade and called out to it. "Are you okay?"

"No I'm not bloody okay!" shouted a gruff voice from the other side of the door. "I'm not coming with you, you bastards!"

"Uncle!" cried Lokum tearfully.

"Lokum?" called the voice. "Lokum, is that you? You have my nephew now, you bastards?!"

"No, we're not the slavers," called Broose. "My name is Sergeant Broose, we are here to help."

"Broose? The one that visited last year?"

"Yes, that's me."

There was a measure of dragging from the other side of the door and finally it was pulled back and dumped onto a handful of blocks of charcoal that had been used to barricade it. A haggard old dwarf stood at the other side, arm tied up in a rough sling made from his shirt, a fretful young dwarf beside him. Broose recognised the old dwarf as the glassmaker Toolbridges, as well as the forge behind him.

"Thank Nish you've come," said Toolbridges. "The bastards took my Kulet, my wife! My daughter and niece as well!"

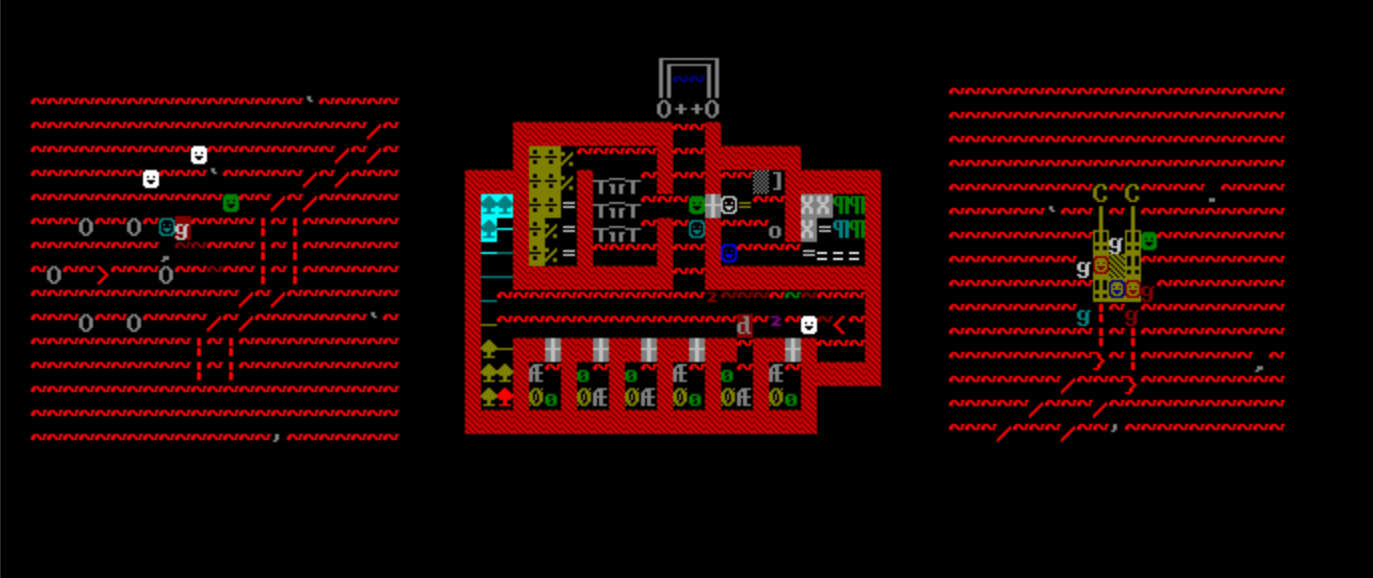
"If they've been captured, they should be relatively unharmed," said Broose. "The slavers will want to keep them intact for sale. If you can tell us what we'll be up against, we'll try and rescue them."

"Goblins, six of 'em. Maybe five if the one I got in the gut didn't make it. Couple of macemen, a swordsman, rest were slaves. Got the girls at the start. Bastard of a marksdwarf leading 'em, though. Shot me in my pick arm, after that we just had to batten down. Dog bought us time, poor beast, but nothing more I could do and my nephews aren't fighters."

"Alright. Datan! Get topside, the three of us are chasing that wagon! Lokum, stay with your uncle."

"I want to help!" cried the younger dwarf.

"Then get your uncle some rest and treat his arm properly. You're not a trained soldier, we are, and you're no use to anyone dead." Broose hefted his crossbow and headed quickly for the exit, Datan and Jora waiting above.



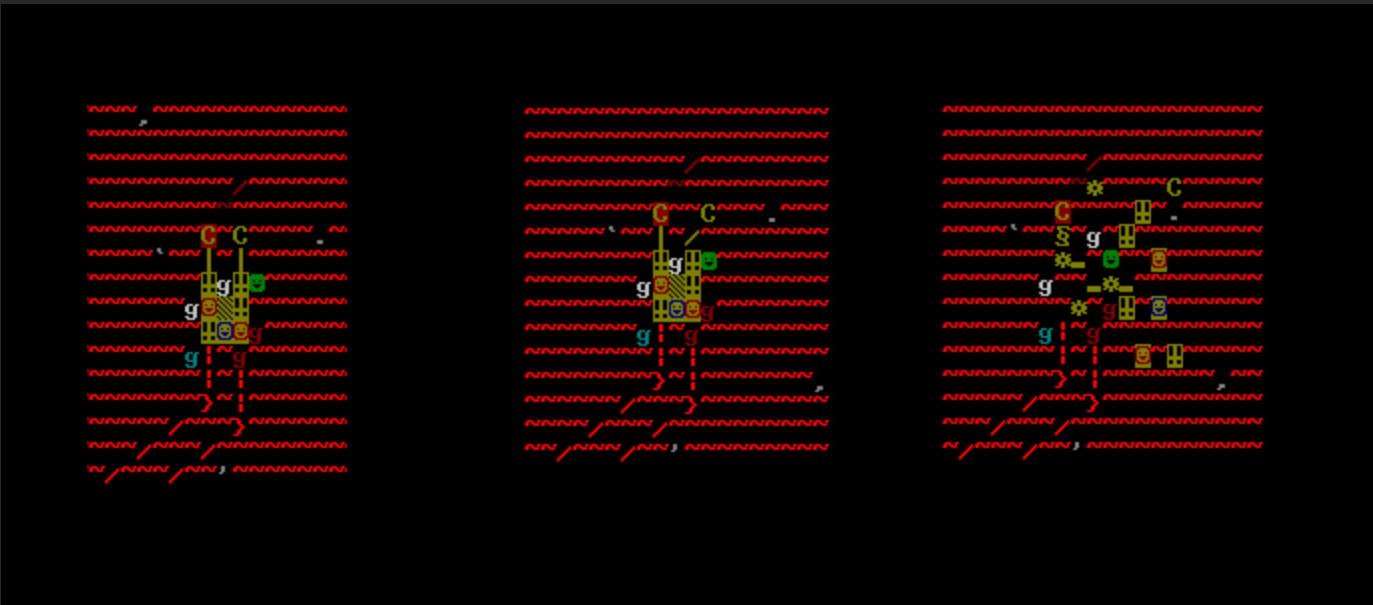
Broose, Datan and Jora huddled behind the sand dune, flat on their bellies and roasting in their chainmail.

"Remind me to wear lighter clothes next time we go into the open desert," muttered Jora.

"Quiet," hushed Broose, studying the wagon ahead. The pair of camels sullenly dragging the wagon across the sand seemed to be exerting all of their energy pulling the driver and dwarven cargo, so most of the goblins and the marksdwarf leading them trudged alongside the wagon in the heat. Broose brought forward his crossbow and laid it on the dune.

"When I fire, head forward and take them. I won't be able to get a clean shot on anyone near the prisoners, so if you can drag the gobbers away from the wagon, do it. All got that? Good."

Broose took aim and released the catch on his crossbow, elastic force propelling the thin steel bolt across the plain in a low arc and neatly impaling one of the camels in the neck. The wagon ground to a halt as the unfortunate beast stumbled forward onto its knees and its companion attempted to bolt in a separate direction, struggling so heavily against the weight of the wagon that it pulled it fully onto its side and over, the poorly constructed joists cracking and the entire vehicle breaking apart, sending the cages tumbling into the sands.



Jora and Datan sprang from their hiding place, charging at the band of slavers with brandished sabre and axe. The swordsgoblin and macegoblins drew their weapons and the two slaves made a brief effort to escape before the marksdwarf picked up a piece of torn camel tether and began whipping them towards the onrushing dwarves. Jora brought her sabre up across the torso of the first slave in a clean arc, sending it flying forward past the swordsgoblin and into the sands. Datan roughly lopped the head from the second slave and charged into the two macegoblins with a battlecry. Seeing the way the wind was blowing, the marksdwarf immediately turned tail and ran.

Datan roughly deflected a blow from one macegoblin with his shield, bringing his axe through the sternum of the other, then bringing its hooked end backward into the other's jaw. He wrenched the weapon out and struck another blow into the goblin's shoulder as it was still recoiling from the first blow and struck the spot again, cleaving through the torso on the third strike. Narrowly blocking another strike from the other macegoblin, he kicked his opponent in the shins and then brought the axe down upon him, splitting the goblin's skull with the blade.

Jora danced in the sand, slashing at the swordsgoblin while ducking and dodging his own strokes. A lucky blow dropped her to her knees and she glanced up as the goblin raised his blade for the killing blow. She brought up her free hand, filled with sand, and scattered it across the goblin's face. As the swordsman reeled from blindness, she thrust upward with her sabre and ran him through, grimacing as he toppled onto her. She shrugged him off and turned to chase the marksdwarf, only to find he had disappeared.

The marksdwarf stopped for a moment to catch his breath; he had made it to a high dune, out of sight of the two dwarves that had caught up with the wagon. He glanced up at the sound of scuffling from above and let out a brief cry as another dwarf landed on his chest, pinning him down and thrusting a crossbow into his beard. His eyes widened in recognition.

"Broose?" he exclaimed.

"...Brickbeard?" came the equally surprised reply. "What the hell are you doing here?"

"What does it look like I'm doing? What the hell are *you* doing here?"

"What does it look like *I'm* doing? Gigin's teeth, man. Stot! *Stot!*" Broose stood up, keeping the crossbow levelled at the dusty ochre-bearded dwarf as he backed away.

"Get moving," he hissed. "You've got maybe half a minute to get behind that next dune before the rest of my squad gets here, Brick."

"Damn it. Thanks, friend."

"You owe me for this, you son of a bitch. Now go!"

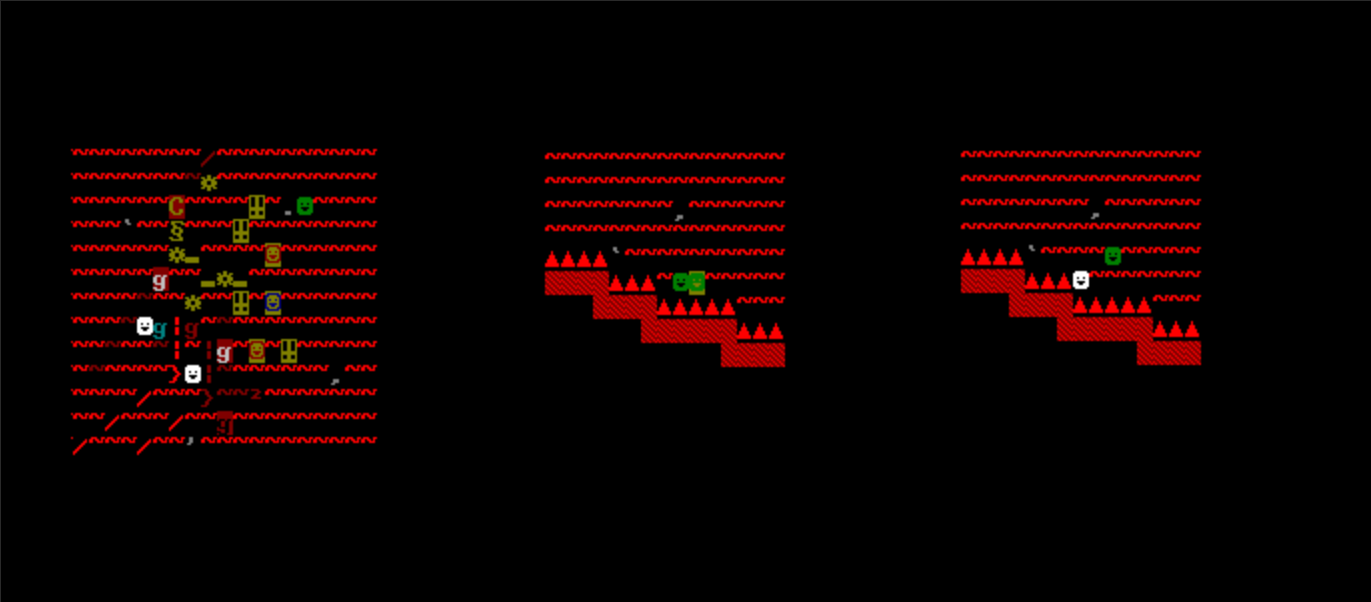
Broose gritted his teeth as the marksdwarf ran across the sandy plain, diving behind the next dune just as Jora crested the one behind Broose.

"Cleared out the goblins," she said. "Datan got the cages open, they're a bit rattled but they'll be fine. Any luck with the dwarf?"



"No," grunted Broose. "Must've gotten away. Let's get those dwarves back to their family, aye?"

Broose spared a last look at the far dune before heading back to the remains of the wagon with Jora. Five minutes later, an ochre-bearded dwarf struggled out from under the red sands and began the long trek back across the desert.



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Update Length: 2460 words, 3 ascii strips  
Current Buffer: ~450 words.  
Next Update: Friday

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **June 03, 2009, 12:03:01 pm**

You do realize sand is double ~, and blood is single ~? Looks like they're in a world of blood :D Great side story though. Stug's proving to be quite the philosopher.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **June 03, 2009, 12:21:39 pm**

No double tildes in AsciiDraw, or about half of the more common DF symbols (no omega sign for statues, e.g.). So I have to make do. =/

Edit: Wait, better idea. Just look at the top line of this forum and we'll pretend it was deliberate. ;D

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **June 03, 2009, 07:12:10 pm**

wow amazing. i like it :D

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Chromie** on **June 04, 2009, 02:45:13 am**

I uh.. I read this whole thing in one go. \*blearyeyed\*  
  
Bravo, bravo!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **June 04, 2009, 08:39:28 pm**

Heh, I can see it now. The next time Brickbeard and Broose meet, Broose will casually mention that he's member of a town led by a ~~former~~ jewel thief. Then the conversation will go,  
  
"Jewel thief? What's his name?"  
"Her name is Emerin."  
"Emerin... Emerin, sounds famil-"

And then Brickbeard will gasp from the sudden realization, and will exclaim, to no reader's surprise, that Emerin is Nireme spelled backwards.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Keita** on **June 05, 2009, 03:32:52 am**

Ta-daa

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Kel the Oblivious** on **June 05, 2009, 04:22:19 pm**

>..>  
  
<..<

It is Friday, and I am almost out the door...  
  
I want mah eye candy! Post the next chapter! Pah-leeze!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Keita** on **June 05, 2009, 04:44:09 pm**

27th Granite, 354

"So how are you today, Cog?" called Frey, leaning back in his cell as sunlight filtered through the gaol's barred windows. As usual, the sergeant refused to speak or acknowledge him. Today he was doing press-ups and stretching while Frey rambled.

"I'm fine too, thank you for asking," said Frey with a smirk. "Isn't the weather lovely today, Cog? It's sunny out." Though Frey received no response to his questioning, the cells were not silent. The three goblin prisoners were casually chatting to one another in their own tongue, apparently unwilling or unable to speak dwarven. Each of the goblins had drawn a set of concentric circles in the dust on their cell floors, using grains of maize from their meal slops to act as markers. Frey had seen goblins play the little game before with pebbles, though he had no understanding of the rules. Sometimes constable Stug would come into the gaol and play for an hour or so on his breaks.

"Seems like fun, doesn't it, Cog?" Frey remarked. "Of course, I'm always a fan of a good puzzlebox myself-"

"Nil," said the sergeant. Frey blinked in surprise.

"Pardon?"

"My name is Nil."

"Well okay then, Nil. Do you enjoy puzzleboxes?" Frey waited for a few moments before it became apparent he was going to receive no further reply.

"Well, perhaps you shall tell me some other day, Nil."

Frey looked up as the gaol door opened. Ascubis wandered in with some bowls of brown chow, mixed with firecaps and boiled agave sprouts, much as usual.

"Scooby, you are the wind beneath my wings," chuckled Frey. "What culinary delicacies has Urgash prepared for us tonight?"

"Give it a rest, Frey," sighed Ascubis. "It's the same slop as every night. Stop calling me that, too."

"Thanks, Scooby." Frey gave the guard a wink and Ascubis rolled his eyes and went to ladling out the slops. When he had left, Frey turned to the sergeant.

"So I notice you prefer the firecaps, Nil. I mean you always eat them first and leave the sprouts til later, and nobody could possibly prefer the chow, so why don't we do a swap? You can have all the firecaps from my bowl and I'll take the sprouts off your hands? Deal?"

Frey reached across the bars for Nil's bowl, but the sergeant grabbed his wrist.

"I leave the sprouts til last," he said slowly, "because I like them." He released Frey's hand.

"Alright," said Frey. "What about the other way around? I'll take the firecaps and you can have my sprouts. Sound good?"

Nil did not respond, but neither did he stop Frey exchanging the contents of the bowls.

"Well, enjoy your meal, Nil."

Frey raised his bowl cheerfully. Nil ignored him.

*Sgt Broose's Diary*  
2nd Slate, 354

Received a visit from Lokum today, bearing news both ill and good. His uncle is taking well to healing and has already begun bossing around his nephews at the glass forge, and he brought two baskets of sunset wine and ruinjam, a welcome gift from his aunt, cousin and sister. The ill news is that the sietch received an escaped survivor from Halfmirrors, which according to Dani's translation of the map is the sietch closest to the 'new' settlement of Threepools. The humans had written their equivalent of 'Stone' and the first letter of their word for 'breaker' on the map, so I guess we know where he's holed up.

Stonebreaker's goblins took the sietch and enslaved the inhabitants but additionally brought in a mining crew. According to the survivor, who has stayed on at Catchwater, they are fortifying the sietch as a watchtower. Sounds like Stonebreaker may be planning on digging in at his new home. Understandable, it's near the Cryptic border and right on top of a major trade route. Good access to slaves, conscripts and goods and food for plundering.

I've put in a request with Emerin and the captain to take Jora and Datan to investigate. Khain's still laid up with his injury, though he can walk with it and sometimes comes to watch sparring training or take walks around the town. May be a long time before he can fight with it, though.

3rd Slate, 354

Shadows. Even in the draped half-light of the dream, the figures stood out as dull purple shadows distinct from the rest. Three circled him, pacing around the blurry, indistinct form of the mountain's slope. He glanced to his axe, the curve of its sharpened edge glimmering with pure white light amongst the mottled greens and blues. He swung his blade deftly at the first shadow, but it dodged to the left, its bladed arm swinging close by his face. A second shadow lunged at him, but he brought up his shield to deflect the blow, its silvery surface flaring with brilliant light as he deflected it. He ducked and dodged the shadows' strokes, their bladed limbs gleaming with violet strobes as they swung, until the third shadow left itself open. He raised his axe to deliver the killing blow when the air left his chest. Staring down in shock he watched the spear of darkness erupt from his chest like billowing ink shot into water. He turned with the last of his strength and gazed up into the emotionless, silvery face of a steel dwarf on the ridge above. Then he felt his body turn to liquid, running down the mountain's slope toward the welcoming embrace of the dark blue mists below.

Corporal Datan awoke suddenly, his breaths desperate and laboured. He glanced around at the others in the brass circle - some had already woken and left after the ritual, others remained deep in slumber. Fora was awake, huddled against one of the pillars with her knees pressed up against her chest.

"Troubled sleep?" she asked. Datan nodded. "Fears about the journey today?"

"No," he said. "I did not see the cathedral. There was something else."

"What?"

"An ill omen."

*8th Slate, 354*

Broose studied the fortifications from a distance, laid flat on the dune with a hand shadowing his eyes. The three dwarves and their guide were covered by dusty cloaks stained dark scarlet with prairie rose dye, giving them an element of camouflage against the sea of red sands. Rough diorite walls had been erected and quickly, with work progressing on a small lookout tower. Goblin bowmen stood atop the walls, scanning the desert plains boredly for signs of trouble.

"Locked up tight," said Broose. "We're not getting in there, and no sign of the inhabitants. Hey, wake up kid." He nudged Datan in the ribs, who started.

"What? Ah, sorry sarge. Not been getting much sleep lately."

"Well deal with it. Mind on the job and all that."

"Aye, sarge. Could've been taken already. That Threepools place on the map's only a few days away."

"Can you get us there?" Broose asked the guide.

"Within a league or so," said the dwarf, "but you're on your own getting into that place. No offense, but you soldiers get paid to risk your necks, I don't."

"Alright, take us there."

*10th Slate, 354*

Haste was the watchword of Threepools. Everything appeared hurried; the construction, the stockpiling, the people. The site itself was a good one; a raised rocky outcropping over three small lakes where a pair of brooks met and ran on into a river, but the walls were a quickly assembled affair of local diorite and chalk. Not even time to mix mortar it seemed, the walls were dry-stone cut and held together by brute weight and sheer masonic ingenuity. Rushed as it may have been however, Broose could see it was sturdy dwarven engineering and would hold in a siege, especially one that came later rather than sooner - improvements and modifications were being made even now.

Work crews were dragging stone blocks and boulders up to the fort and empty wagons down to the lower quarries at any given time, droves of goblin, dwarven and even human slaves providing ample labour for the whipmasters to command. The outer quarries were largely being excavated to make more sheer the outer defences of Threepools; her engineers had none of the aesthetic reservations of Broose's own home town and he knew well enough that much of the fortress' stone came from the chambers being dug within. Hidden barracks, armouries and slave pits would all be excavated to cater to the fortress' needs.

"Why are they building an overground fort like that?" asked Jora. "Why not just dig straight into the mountainside like in the Mountainhomes?"

"Engineering marches on," said Broose.

"What?"

"There've been a few civil wars amongst dwarves this past century, corporal. Fortress architects started to learn the lesson that it doesn't matter how well trapped your hole in the ground is when you're facing an enemy that just direct a river straight into it and drown your entire army. So you build walls up to take advantage of archery and to divert any unwanted water flows. Would not surprise me if there are drains being delved in that fort as well, just in case."

"How we getting in then, sarge?"

"You two are getting in with the work crews. You'll have to bury your armour here, but you can probably hide your weapons in the stone carts and grab them when you've gotten in."

"What about you, sarge?" asked Datan.

"I shall be doing a bit of a look-see around whilst you're busy hauling blocks. This is scouting, so no engagements. When you get in, stick together and I'll find you."

A short while later, the three soldiers had buried their armour in a safe spot and Jora and Datan had smuggled themselves down to the quarry to join the work crews. Broose stole some rope from the construction work and made himself a rough lasso, scaling up a quiet section of the wall and perching on the edge, looking around. He smirked to himself as he saw who was on patrol.

Brickbeard watched boredly over the quarries below as antlike herds of slaves cut rock from the cliff-face and dragged it to the batallion of masons cutting boulders into locking dry-stone blocks. He paced along the line of the wall, waving to the other patroldwarf on duty and ducking under the lip of the guardhouse roof to light his pipe. A hand knocked it away as it grabbed him by the mouth and pulled him into the shadows, a thin steel dagger resting gently against his throat.

"Hullo again, Brickie," said his assailant softly.

"Mmrph?" exclaimed Brickbeard incredulously.

"Aye, it's me. Now I know you're not stupid, so I'm going to let my hand off. We good on that? Alright." He did so, and Brickbeard turned around to face him.

"You son of a bitch," Brickbeard spat.

"Thanks," chuckled Broose. "I'm thrilled to see you too." He embraced him tightly and the two dwarves laughed. They released one another.

"I thought you were stuck in the pokey," said Brickbeard.

"Nah, got out in the big break a few years back."

"Damn it, dwarf, you should've found me! We had a sweet gig going with a kobold smuggling giant cave spider venom, was a real laugh until the little scrag got himself killed."

"Ouch. Law track him down?"

"Nah, his suppliers. Guess he was short changing them on the revenue, and we've heard all the jokes about short changing dwarves. Started on this job not long after."

"What were you up to while I was in the deep hole, then?"

"This and that. Did a bit of banditry, the usual. Had a string of successful gigs with this girl Nireme, culminated in a big jewellery theft. Bitch ratted us out and left with the goods, of course. I ever find her, I'll slit her throat myself." Broose did the anagram work and opted to say nothing more on that. "So where've you been for the last three years, then?"

"Stuck here in the desert, actually. Got out on a boat, bloody thing breaks apart, strands us at the desert's edge. We finally get a wagon built to leave, thing breaks down and I end up taking residence. I don't know, Brick. Sometimes it's like Gigin Herself is out to get me."

"Well, you can hook back up with us now you're here. Food's not bad, regular at any rate and it isn't a half bad job."

"Not really sure-"

"Hey," grinned Brickbeard. "I hear there's looting opportunities on the horizon."

"Looting?" asked Broose with interest. "Really, now? What sort of-"

"Oi!" called a voice from along the wall. "Brickbeard! Who's that you're talking to?"

Broose turned quickly, a chill creeping down his spine. The other marksdwarf was heading towards them at a quick march, crossbow held loosely in his hand.

Jora and Datan trudged through the fortress archway with the other slaves, heads down under their cloaks and pulling the heavy wagon of bricks on their ropes. The slaves set the wagon down and began moving in a different direction. The two soldiers walked over to the bricks and prepared to retrieve their weapons when two heavy, meaty hands grabbed them bodily by the shoulder.

"What do you think you're doing?" roared the slavemaster, a monstrosly muscled brute of a human.

"We-" stuttered Jora, pointing at the wagon. "The blocks-"

"Are going to construction. You two maggots are on kitchen duty! Now get to work or it'll be the lash for the both of you!" The slavemaster threw the pair into the mob of slaves trudging towards a tent-covered building. Caught up in the flow of pressed bodies, they were helpless to do aught but watch as a fresh team of slaves picked up the wagon's ropes and hauled it and their weapons away.

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I promise and I deliver. Albeit at the last minute (it was a very long Friday).

*Total words in update: 2,307*  
*Current buffer: 0 words (time to get my write on!)*  
*Next update: Monday*

Do not demand from the great one. But by all means, demand from *me*. :P

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **June 05, 2009, 08:49:44 pm**

lol scuuby. i thought i heard enough of that from my friends lol i guess not :P

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Enzo** on **June 06, 2009, 12:21:34 am**

Funny thing. I never really put it together, due to the episodic nature and the fact that they were never in a scene together, that there was an elf Datan and a dwarf Datan. And that maybe I should be more specific with my requests. :-\

This is cool too though.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **June 06, 2009, 12:27:51 am**

Agreed. But I hope Broose doesn't get to have all the fun with these outdoor excursions. Maybe story limitations prevent others from going out, I guess.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **June 08, 2009, 06:22:17 pm**

"Claspreadies!" hailed Brickbeard, slapping Broose on the shoulder and bringing him into the light. "Broose, this here's Corporal Claspreadies, a decent shot with a Burnlight and Strongarm. Claspreadies, this is one of my men; Sergeant Broose, one of the finest axedwarves to ever grace my side in battle. Brought him in to sign on, didn't I, Broose?"

"Oh, aye," said Broose, following Brickbeard's lead.

"Oh, alright," said Claspreadies, the crossbow dropping to his side. "You ought to put new privates through the quartermaster's office, though, Brick. Get him some armour and whatnot." The marksdwarf frowned, noticing Broose's bow. "Thought you said he was an axedwarf?"

"I was," said Broose. "Got a dent in my back six years ago from a gobber mace. Trained up as a ranger after that." He lifted his shirt and turned to reveal a rather nasty scar which seemed to appease Claspreadies.

"Fair do. Brick, you want me to cover for you while you take him down to sign on?"

"Good one," thanked Brickbeard. He led Broose down the stairwell, commenting; "Goblin mace?"

"Couldn't very well say I got it striking down a royal guardsdwarf, could I? Also, private? Bit of a demotion."

"Yeah, but the pay's better. Got to be better than whatever hole in the sand you're working for now, right?"

"Yeah, probably. You think I should send them a resignation letter?"

"Chances are you'll be able to deliver it personally when the army comes to them," Brickbeard laughed. "Come on then, it's this way."

Brickbeard led Broose through the cramped fortress streets, bare rock sanded smooth by the passage of hundreds of feet and sandwiched between double-storey drystone buildings filled with kitchens, slaughterhouses, tanneries and forges; professions impractical or



unpreferable to work in the less ventilated tunnels beneath the fort. The pair reached a central bailey consisting of four drystone walls with saw-toothed parapets surrounding a courtyard with steps leading below ground. Broose recognised the formation; any opponent able to penetrate the outer walls would have to face a murder hole inside the bailey trying to get down to the lower tunnels. He could also make out the faint lines in the worn stone where the trapsetters had carved out the rock and replaced it to conceal their work.

Beneath the bailey, Broose was surprised by the layout of the dungeons; a blend of dwarven design and ruthless goblin practicality. The wide central corridor, three dwarves wide with barracks and other rooms branching off, was common to most dwarven settlements, but the saw-toothed walls reminiscent of the tower's jagger design bore little rough bunks in the alcoves. Ragged goblin and occasionally dwarven forms slumbered in some of them. Brickbeard noticed Broose's eye.

"You remember the raid on Murderwatches?" he asked. "When the commander went dirt-side once we broke through the tower gate?"

"Vividly," said Broose darkly. "We lost Corporals Coppergates and Halftraded to the ambushes going through those tunnels. I remember the slave bunks though, aye."

"Well, the General picked up this goblin 'zosto-smang', Vilepoints. Don't ask me what it means, she's an architect. She's responsible for a bunch of the designs and has sort of taken up a role as an advisor. Speaks proper language and all as well as that gobber nonsense. Here we are, anyway."

The quartermaster's office was cramped, much like everything else in Threepools. One entire half of the room was stacked high with bins of freshly sewn leather armour and shields and rusted and bloody chainmail and weapons, testifying to the diverse range of equipment sources Stonebreaker's dwarves drew upon. A cosmopolitan mob of dwarves and goblins occupied the other half, haranguing the tired goblin with various requests. Broose took one look at the mess and barged through to the desk, elbowing through anyone in his way. The goblin, whose striped identified him as a corporal, glared up with haggard yellow eyes.

"What you want?" he spat in thickly accented dwarven.

"That's what do you want, *sir*," said Broose sharply, "and what I want is for you to get a grip of the situation, corporal! You're a mess and you should've been changed out hours ago, but since you haven't you can bloody well *sit up, straighten your uniform and sort this mess out!*" Broose turned and bore down upon the suddenly attentive crowd like the wrath of the gods.

"*As for you lot*, if you aren't properly dressed and in rank in ten seconds every one of you is going to be taking turns at the at the whipping post! Move it, move it, move it!" The crowd quickly evolved into a rank under Broose's withering gaze, albeit a rank heavily preoccupied with doing up buttons, trying to slouch to attention and jostling to hide behind someone else or, failing that, themselves. Many were missing various articles of uniform and collectively appeared to have the grace and discipline of a pregnant hippopotamus.

"I've never seen as sorry a sight in my life, but it'll do," conceded Broose before returning his attention to the quartermaster. "My name is Sergeant Broose Helmedentranced, but you may call me God. Sarge is equally appropriate." Broose judged the goblin's look of fury-laced but clearly submissive fear to be appropriate and went on. "Each dwarf, goblin or man here will approach one at a time from the left of the rank to right, *in order*, and receive one helmet, one pair of boots, one pair of gloves and one breastplate, all in leather. If they want metal armour, weapons or shields, they need a signed chit from a superior officer and you are to take no excuses. Is that understood?"

"Yes, sarge," grumbled the goblin, avoiding his gaze.

"But before all of that, you are going to get hold of a set of chainmail, a nose helm and a dagger and battleaxe with sheathes, all in steel and all in good condition."

"And what in for me?" asked the goblin. Broose leaned in close enough to smell the raw meat on the goblin's breath and brought his fist down on the table with a dull thud.

"You get to be in my good graces," he said in a low voice. "Which is a darn sight better than anyone else in this room. Here's my chit." He opened his fist just enough to reveal to the goblin and only to the goblin a handful of peridot cabochons. The goblin corporal's eyes sparkled as avarice flooded in to fill the void left by suddenly absent wrath. As he reached forward to take the gems, Broose grabbed hold of his wrist.

"What's your name, corporal?"

"Inkedboils," said the goblin. Broose released the grip and the peridots disappeared into a pocket. He straightened up.

"Well, Corporal Inkedboils, you can ensure those items are delivered to my room, which I know you are going to arrange for me as well, after you have dealt with these miscreants." He turned to the still-attentive crowd and bellowed. "You lot have one hour to sort out your equipment, at the end of which you will be present, correct and attentive in the main barracks for drills. I will be checking headcount and anyone found missing will have the pleasure of my personal dissatisfation." Broose gave one last nod to the servile Corporal Inkedboils and marched out of the supply chamber, Brickbeard trying his level best not to burst into laughter until they had gone the length of a hallway.

"What did you bribe him with?" he asked upon finally getting his breath back.

"Gemstones. My old boss had about six caches of them hidden around town she thought nobody knew about. Call it severance pay."

"Come on," said Brickbeard, "let's get a drink. Now you're a sergeant, you can mump me some ale at the mess hall."

"How about I treat you both?" said a voice from behind them. The pair turned to see a lightly armoured dwarf behind them. The rankings on his cloak marked him as a captain. The massive warhammer strapped to his back and twin scars along his face marked him as an officer with real battlefield experience. Brickbeard saluted.

"Captain Torir," he greeted. "This is-"

"Another soldier smuggled in from your band of thieves, Sergeant Brickbeard," said Torir. "More audacious than the others, at that. Impressive words, *probationary* Sergeant Helmedentranced. I shall be watching you very carefully to see that they hold up to the truth." He clapped hands on the shoulders of the two sergeants and grinned a mirthless grin. "Mess hall is this way, men. You can tell me all about how you got here."

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Words in update: 1,432  
Buffer: 0 (busier weekend than I thought)  
Next update: Wednesday at the latest.

I'm afraid that story limitations do prevent some of the others leaving at this immediate stage, particularly for the next few updates. They also limit the implementation of some of the non-fortress soldiers clearly not on Stonebreaker's side for a while. Instead, I shall try to use this to introduce some of the other non-fortress soldiers, as well as a couple of fortress dwarves who cannot appear in the story yet (either waiting for a suitable migration or for the Baron in the case of Kanute's character). Datan the elf will actually make an appearance eventually, but the town only has three dwarves in its militia who could conceivably leave.

Slightly shorter update than usual. Will aim to provide a larger update on Wednesday to make up for it. After the next update or two, we shall likely be returning to stories in the fortress for a little bit.

A question as well; are people very much put off by the non-fortress diversions? I can try to keep close to events within the fortress as

they actually happen, but for the next year or so ingame not a great deal actually happens (mostly construction work) and the expedition style writing allows me to make the greater conflict which serves as the backdrop to Olonkulet's rise more relevant by involving story dwarves and giving them personal stakes in its development beyond news from the odd trader, providing reasoning for the ambush attacks and setting the stage for the eventual besieging of Olonkulet.\*

Comments and criticisms appreciated.

\*Avoiding the following exchange:

"Why do goblins keep attacking us, Likot?"

"Because they're goblins, Urist! Now shut up and eat your dog burger."

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **June 08, 2009, 06:46:16 pm**

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Awesome. The side stories dont really detract, especially if theres nothing happening back home. I just wanna know if anything happens to Ragna or if she does anything awesome meanwhile.

Im starting to see a lot of Prachett influence. Especially the quartermaster scene; reminds me a lot of Night Watch (the book, not the group). ;D

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **June 08, 2009, 08:26:19 pm**

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I like the overland excursions. Fortress mode itself provides a very poor framework for writing an interesting story, so anything to get away from that is good in my mind.

Or maybe it's just having two characters that are frequently featured in the story. Go figure.

Anyways, keep it up, Iituem.

*Emerin's log*

Dammit, somebody stole one of my stashes of peridots. If I ever find the bastard who did, I'll make him cut me ten star ruby mini-forges, with failure punishable by fifty one days in jail and a beating from Captain Ragna. That'll show that petty jewel thi-ARGH! The irony is killing me!

I'm a little uncomfortable with letting Broose go on his little adventures and taking Jora and Datan with him. With Khain wounded, our fighting force is limited to Ragna and her elven swordmaster ways and her guardsmen. Ragna better be damn capable of defending the town, because I don't think I can allow further expeditions if the safety of this fort is compromised.

I allowed them in the first place on Ragna and Frey's advisement. They reasoned that if they can scout out the enemy and befriend a network of towns, then our little outpost will never be in danger because we'll always see the enemy coming. They were convincing enough, but making sure these towns don't go telling the mountainhomes about us will be expensive. That elf Datan is already taking too much of our money.

Frey won't talk to me about the prisoners, and I don't want to ask him. Ever since he mangled that dwarf, I've decided to disassociate myself from it completely.

\* \* \*

Unrelated to the above, I get the feeling that Emerin won't survive the story. I think her fate is tied closely with that of Olonkulet's, since she seems to be drawn to it despite her will, and in order for the city to become the technological terror it's supposed to be, she must die. Otherwise, she's too much of a good natured leader to let something so horrible happen on her watch, and the city will prosper under her guidance.

If this seems somewhat self-absorbed, it probably is. But I'm perfectly fine with Emerin dying to serve the greater purpose of the story. And hey, there's already a character (probably several) who is just itching to cut her throat.

I hope this happens at some point, but not soon. I'm sure there will be a critical time and a critical place where Emerin may or may not die.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Kanute** on **June 08, 2009, 08:39:19 pm**

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These side-stories don't so much detract as they add to the story, in my opinion. I really enjoyed the description of the architecture and the fusion of the human, dwarven, and goblin societies into something new. This last update's probably my favourite: exotic locales, strange people, and character development. It has it all!

I don't see any Terry Pratchett influence, myself: I can read any amount of Iituem's work while I can't stand Pratchett at all.

Well, except for the Mincewind side-story, of course.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Kel the Oblivious** on **June 08, 2009, 10:30:19 pm**

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While I do look forward to watching what you do with Kel, I still find great enjoyment in reading your stories. It is like a true novel. It does not take place in a single setting. The heros must travel, seek out their foes, strike them down in distant lands, and return with scars and glory.

Also, it is a welcome diversion. I want to see what is going on in the outside world, one of the problems with fortress mode, you can not wage war, only defend against it. Take the fight to the enemy!

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Enzo** on **June 08, 2009, 11:16:25 pm**

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At first I was wary of taking a few characters away from all the rest. With so many characters, once you shift focus so much it can be hard to shift back. We'll see if that's a problem later on, but the execution so far has been great. While, in general, I'm not big on the political-intrigue side of fiction, it's fun to watch as this world develops and it's big players take shape. And the militia always seems to be doing something fun.

As for the Emerin dying hypothesis, there were a couple hints early on of revolution. But somewhere along the line Emerin slid from *untrustworthy con artist* to *lovable rogue*. Maybe Brickbeard will mix things up for her? Because your theory, Jim, is... quite plausible. I'm

looking forward to the whole...main Olonkulet storyline, I guess you'd call it. With the mechanics and all.

Quote from: Iituem on June 08, 2009, 06:22:17 pm

Datan the elf will actually make an appearance eventually, but the town only has three dwarves in its militia who could conceivably leave.

Glad to hear it. It seemed like as soon as I requested Datan, other-Datan got shoved into the spotlight, but I guess that was planned before I said anything.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Duke of Nawn** on **June 09, 2009, 06:31:52 am**

Okay. Okay.  
Okay.

I've been wanting to request a dwarf for like a week but I was having a bout of exceptional unimaginativity. No longer! I am now merely mostly unimaginative.

Name: Caul Dren.  
Profession: Chef, cookerdwarf, or foodinator.

Caul Dren is one of the Stonebreaker faction's cooks. He is quite happy to make a wholehearted attempt to cook anything and everything at hand, with the possible exception of his cookware and heat source. (May or may not have been jailed for cooking his fellow cooks to keep with the theme of the thread). To this end, is also quite happy to take apart anything too large or uncookable for slightly more cookable bits, be it vegetation, animal, mineral or otherwise (also, if he should become particularly excited with the culinary prospects, living, dead, or otherwise). He is also quite happy to cook to feed whoever is around, wherever he is. He's fairly good at making a horrendous atrocity into something surprisingly edible, but can't muster the enthusiasm to do a particularly good job at mundane meals. Firmly believes that culinary perfection can only come from the fusion of all flavors, textures, viscosities, phases of matter and whatever else he can frankenstein together.  
I'm not writing a backstory because it has recently come to my attention that I suck at it, and anything Mr. Ituem comes up with will undoubtedly be better anyway.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **June 10, 2009, 07:57:21 pm**

**Vignette: Elven Justice**  
*12th Slate, 354*

"You planning on paying for that?" demanded Mincewind of the dwarf before her. The dwarf, an especially stout specimen by the name of Grettir, wiped his beard of ale and glared at the bardwarf belligerently.

"No, what of it?" he challenged.

"If you're not going to pay, I'll need you to leave."

"I reckon I'll be staying here with that fine beard of yours," leered Grettir. "Are you going to stop me?"

"I'm telling you," said Mincewind crossly, "get out of here or-"

"Or what?" Grettir raised his tankard threateningly. "Maybe you need a lesson in manaaaaaargh!" A hand had found its way companionably onto Grettir's shoulder and the dwarf sank slightly at the knees. Stug leaned in to the dwarf's ear and pried the tankard from his unresisting hand.

"Perhaps need calm down," the guardsdwarf said soothingly. "Why not pay tab, get fresh air. Sound good, yes?" Grettir nodded feebly and tossed a few firecaps onto the table before slunking out of the beerhall, clutching his shoulder. Stug put his hand on the table and removed it, revealing the small lump of rock cake.

"Thanks for, uh, having a word with him," said Mincewind.

"Yes," said Stug. "Stop putting cement in rock cake, Mince-dwarf. Last week, chip tooth on faery cake. Not happy. Will 'have word' with you if not stop. Yes?" Mincewind nodded. "Good."

Stug returned to the table where Ragna was sat with her own mug, giving him an appraising eye.

"Well," she said, "he left without a broken jaw, so you're getting better at your people skills. Good job, lance-constable." Stug nodded.

"Is law. Make happen." He looked at her suddenly with an almost childlike expression of hope. "Story time?"

"Pardon?" the old dwarf asked.

"Is beer-place, is good day. Tell story about elf, like before. You were on way to trial," he prompted helpfully. Ragna stared at him for a few moments, then shrugged.

"Well, as you say..."

Lieutenant Ragna Stockadebow found herself on the way to trial for high treason one bright summer morning, ferried through miles of shady forest by a constant guard of Elven rangers and the two druids appointed to represent and prosecute her at the trial. To her great dismay, the elf appointed to her defense was apparently disgusted by her very presence and refused point blank to speak with her. She did not mind this arrangement in the slightest, save that it did not bring her much hope of a favourable outcome at trial.

Beyond their nightly rests, the entourage stopped only once during the two weeks of the journey. This respite came as a diversion to the blackened grove where Ragna's companions had been incinerated, along with much of the forest around. The grove was currently inhabited by a handful of elves in travelling coats and boots, all engaged in what appeared to be scrutinous study of the soil, the charred tree roots, even the discarded rocks. Based on the deference given to them by the rangers, Ragna guessed them to be druids. Her two druidic lawyers spoke with the forensic druids at length in their Elven tongue, giving Ragna time enough to study her surroundings.

Around the edges of the clearing, signs of life were already returning. Grass blades poked out of the ashen soil in many places and a veritable wealth of fungi had sprung up on the blackened tree husks. Within the clearing itself not a sign of life could be made out, beyond the druids gathered there. Not even fungi had sprouted to take advantage of the rich nutrients in the ash; the clearing was a near-perfect circle of dead ground. Ragna noticed the prosecuting druid, Inefa, grow increasingly agitated at the information he was receiving from the druids up to the point where he broke off from the group and picked a pair of rocks from the ground within the clearing. Bringing one down sharply upon the other, he cracked one of the rocks neatly in two and examined the two halves with a look of dawning horror. The pieces fell from his hands and Ragna briefly caught a glimpse of a film of red liquid coating the breaks as Inefa strode up to her and challenged her angrily.

"What did you do, dwarf?" she raged. "Ignorant and malicious arson I can understand, but *this*? For such an act, I should slay you where you stand and burn your corpse until nothing of it could be eaten!"

"What is going on?" demanded Ragna. "What are you talking about?"

"You have cut at the very heart of the forest with your cruel axe! You have done what ought to be impossible, and when I find out how I shall stop at nothing to see you punished!"

Ragna tried once again to protest that the human she had seen had caused the fires, but once again the elves would have none of it. Little comfort was derived from this as it became increasingly more evident to her that her guilt was already predetermined. The elves departed from the burnt out glade not long thereafter, continuing their journey through the endless Elven forests toward the tree-city of Sealpasses. As the days dragged on, Ragna began to notice a change in her surroundings. The trees began to grow taller, the leaves broader and richer in colour. Birdsong rang clearer and a great freshness filled the air, heightening her sense of smell. In one of his more communicative moods Inefa attributed this increased vividity to the health of the Force within the region.

The thick canopy of the forest prevented Ragna from seeing Sealpasses until the group was almost upon it, but once there she found it hard to ignore the expansive trunks that formed the Elven treehomes. Fully twelve in number formed a ring around the capital, each trunk as thick as a small house and bearing many layers of branches up above the general canopy of the forest. Each of the home-trees bore a resemblance to a white oak, save for their massive girth and as Inefa would explain, ten to twenty-fold lifespan. At the centre of the ring grew a magnificent tree the like of which Ragna had never seen, similar in form to a great chestnut but with golden bark and silvery-green leaves.

The trunk seemed wide enough to accomodate a drinking hall and it was only upon close examination that she realised it was hollowed within, an entrance at the base leading to a spiral stairwell moulded by the mysterious Elven magic from the living wood of the tree. Up this central well Ragna was brought, catching glimpses through knot-hole windows in the great trunk of the city below; a multi-tiered arrangement of criss-crossing bridges and linked tree homes centered around the twelve great oaks, each of which bore bridges from one another and to the central trunk, giving Sealpasses the appearance from above of a great spoked wheel with the golden chestnut as its hub.

Soon enough Ragna found herself once again within a cell, this one specially grown for the occasion. A small, knot-hole windowed room in one of the chestnut's higher branches, organic bars had been grown across the roof of the chamber, save for the circular hatchway in which an ornately carved hatch-cover had been installed and through which Ragna had been interred. It seemed Elves treated 'dead' wood even more reverently than they did the living trees in which they made their homes.

A few hours passed before a guard brought Ragna from her cell to a great circular hall formed of smoothed and interlocking branches at the crest of the tree. The wood had been shaped into tiered steps upon which a multitude of elves sat, creating something of a theatre about the central platform upon which an elf sat upon an elegant wooden throne in a robe that seemed whiter than white, embroidered with golden thread in a stylised floral theme and within which small, brightly coloured flowers had been sewn. The elf seemed no older than the others, bearing that same ever-youthful appearance, but her eyes and bearing spoke of wisdom and regality.

The trial was about to begin.

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Partial Update Today because this week has been a nightmare and I am knackered. -.-

On the other hand, small update is better than no update. I'll aim to edit this into a full version some time tomorrow and hopefully keep it all flowing better.

(And I think it reasonable to assume you'd rather have an update from a fresh and awake Khelden than a groggy and dead-headed one. Oh, to get the buffer built up again so I don't have to worry about this...)

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Remalle** on **June 10, 2009, 08:44:22 pm**

Quote from: Iituem on June 10, 2009, 07:57:21 pm  
...forensic druids...  
Heh.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **June 10, 2009, 09:36:21 pm**

i note with some interest that our local goblin-dwarf is slowly getting better at talking. still needs to learn to not kill people at the drop of a coin, but definatly getting better at talking ;D

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Kel the Oblivious** on **June 11, 2009, 03:04:43 am**

Marvelous as always. And for some reason, I hear Stug speaking in a Russian accent.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Keita** on **June 11, 2009, 07:10:44 am**

Quote from: Kel the Oblivious on June 11, 2009, 03:04:43 am  
Marvelous as always. And for some reason, I hear Stug speaking in a Russian accent.

I've just got an image of a dwarf in a commisars uniform in my head...

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Aldaris** on **June 11, 2009, 11:54:47 am**

Quote from: Metal Militia on June 11, 2009, 07:10:44 am  
Quote from: Kel the Oblivious on June 11, 2009, 03:04:43 am  
Marvelous as always. And for some reason, I hear Stug speaking in a Russian accent.  
I've just got an image of a dwarf in a commisars uniform in my head...

That...  
Sounds strangely appropreate to his political ideas...

Anyway, I'm looking forward to another episode of Ragna's backstory, as well as seeing who is going to be backstabbed worst by Broose, considering his background I'm not sure whether he's actually infiltrating at all or just deserting without giving away the details of where he came from.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **June 12, 2009, 07:06:53 pm**



Ragna was seated at the edge of the inner circle, an unknown elf joining her to act as translator while Inefa and Avetho approached the centre to argue their cases before the high druid. The dwarf leaned in toward her translator.

"So when do I get to plead my case?" she asked. The translator shook his head.

"You do not."

"What, not at all?"

"No. Your defense will be managed by the counselor. Speak no further, dwarf, the proceedings have begun." The translator nodded to Inefa, who had taken the stage before the high druid and was speaking.

"<Cacame,>" he said formally, addressing the druid by the name of the forest's resident Force, "<this dwarf stands accused of crimes against the nation of the Fin of Saints and against the Force that runs through all. I will argue that she is guilty of oath-breaking and deception, of bringing blade and flame into the forest and setting them loose upon the glades and worst of all of striking a blow against the Force itself. Shall any elf oppose my accusation?>" After a short pause, Avetho spoke.

"<I shall,>" he said simply.

"<Then let the accuser speak,>" said the high druid, "<and I shall hear the truth of it against the opposer.>"

"<Cacame,>" said Inefa, "<The dwarves of the Seared Crypts were allowed permission to travel through the forests guarded by the Fin of Saints on the understanding that no harm would be done to the land and no war would be brought upon the soil. In both these oaths they have failed and this dwarf stands trial as the sole survivor of her band. All others were slain in the course of their devastation.>

"<The dwarven deceivers travelled through the forests in search of a goblin band, whom they tracked to the site of the betrayal and attacked, slaying them by dwarven axe and bolt. They then set fire to the glade, seeking to burn away the evidence, but the flames turned upon them and consumed the dwarves for their crime. One alone survived for the purpose of facing justice. Somehow, the act was able to pierce the very heart of the Force there, rendering a portion of the land truly lifeless and unholy. Even now, druids struggle to coax the Force's return.>"

"Where's his evidence?" hissed Ragna upon hearing the translation.

"None is needed," whispered the translator. "His word is beyond doubt. If that is what he says, it is what he believes to be true."

"But you need evidence! How can that druid know he is speaking truth?"

"Because he is an elf," said the translator simply.

"But they haven't even listened to my story!"

"Your words are meaningless, dwarf. You have been accused of the crime and your troth is in doubt."

"Damn it, I'm the only remaining witness! I've been trying to tell you all about the human that short fire from his hands, but none of you will listen-" Ragna was interrupted by a stream of Elvish from the high druid. The translator nodded.

"The high druid says," he explained, "that if you speak once again, dwarf, he will seal your tongue with tree-sap. Be silent." Ragna glowered, but uncertain of the extent of Elven magic chose to keep her peace.

"<I make no opposition to the charges of oathbreaking and betrayal,>" said Avetho. Ragna rose with a start, then heard the soft creaking of a score of bowstrings and carefully sat back down under the gaze of the archers surrounding the room.

"<It is patently obvious,>" Avetho continued, "<that the dwarves tracked and hunted the goblins with no intent other than to slay them, and their weapons and the markings upon the bodies prove such. The accusation that the dwarves began the fire, I oppose, though I do not oppose that they broke their oath not to harm the forest by *allowing* it to happen. It is my assertion that no dwarf is sufficiently attuned with or has knowledge of the Force to strike at it directly and that the mere razing of a glade, heinous a crime as it is, is not sufficient to work the damage done to the Force at that site. Broken and battered as it is in that place, it appears as if the very power of the Force has been drained from its heart. This is my defense, Cacame.>"

"<Then let the matter be judged,>" said the high druid. "<As no opposition was raised to the charges of oath-breaking, let the dwarves be found guilty on this matter. To the charge of arson the truth cannot be known as to whom first began the fire, so the matter shall be held in abeyance until light is shed upon it. To the charge of desecration the Force finds favour with the accused; I can sense the disturbance in the Force in that place, a vile intrusion recognisable to any who have experienced it before. Your suspicions are made false through your inexperience in the Dark side of the Force, Inefa, and you are to be held blameless for the error. The one who has perpetrated this has escaped for now and must be hunted, but no dwarf can be found guilty for this crime; the secrets of the Force are too closely guarded for any dwarf to conceivably hold.>

"<Let this sentence be placed upon the dwarf, then; to be held within the care of Sealpasses until such time as seven months have passed. She is to have rein of the city, but to cross beyond the borders merits death and war upon her people. This is the penalty for oath-breaking placed upon the Searing Crypts. This is the will of the Force, of Cacame.>"

"<Cacame's will be heard,>" spoke the Elves of Sealpasses in unison.

"And now that the dwarf's word in this matter can be trusted," said the high druid, turning her gaze for the first time to Ragna, "it would please the Force greatly to hear her word on this 'human' of whom she speaks."

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Okay, another short update. Many apologies for the reduced length - play rehearsals this week and a performance tomorrow, plus trying to port Olonkulet as a contiguous story to the writing 'blog. Blaaargh, all very exhausting. -.-

Awesome. Although, Star Wars much? XD

Quote from: Iituem on June 12, 2009, 07:06:53 pm

"<Cacame,>" he said formally, addressing the druid by the name of the forest's resident Force, "<this dwarf stands accused of crimes against the nation of the Fin of Saints and against the Force that runs through all. I will argue that he is guilty of oath-breaking and deception, of bringing blade and flame into the forest and setting them loose upon the glades and worst of all of striking a blow against the Force itself. Shall any elf oppose my accusation?>"

Quote from: Iituem on June 12, 2009, 07:06:53 pm

the nation of the Fin of Saints and against the Force that runs through all. I will argue that he is guilty of oath-breaking and deception,

Quote from: Iituem on June 12, 2009, 07:06:53 pm

argue that he is guilty

Quote from: Iituem on June 12, 2009, 07:06:53 pm

he

wat.

lol, great job.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **June 12, 2009, 10:20:36 pm**

\*Whistles the theme of the Force from Star Wars\*

This gives me a great idea. Somebody needs to request an elf that knows the ways of the dark side of the Force. I'd do it myself, but I already have plenty of characters.

Quote from: Iituem on June 12, 2009, 07:06:53 pm

Okay, another short update. Many apologies for the reduced length - play rehearsals this week and a performance tomorrow, plus trying to port Olonkulet as a contiguous story to the writing 'blog. Blaaargh, all very exhausting. -.-

I'll forgive you. *This time*. Still, though. Impressive dedication, even with all that going on.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **June 13, 2009, 03:06:33 am**

Quote from: Kel the Oblivious on June 11, 2009, 03:04:43 am

Marvelous as always. And for some reason, *I hear Stug speaking in a Russian accent*.

**yes.** i had to re-read that update, but with him as russian. it was awsome ;D

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **June 13, 2009, 03:25:58 am**

\*cough\*

What gender mix-up? >.>

If you think I stop parodying Star Wars there, you're in for a great disappointment.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Enzo** on **June 13, 2009, 03:28:39 am**

Quote from: ousire on June 13, 2009, 03:06:33 am

Quote from: Kel the Oblivious on June 11, 2009, 03:04:43 am

Marvelous as always. And for some reason, *I hear Stug speaking in a Russian accent*.

**yes.** i had to re-read that update, but with him as russian. it was awsome ;D

I think most of us did that. I know I did. And it *was* awesome. "Story Time?"

Heh, I like Star Wars, so no harm no foul :) I love all of Ragnas stuff, BTW, she makes a perfect lancer (<http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/TheLancer>) for Emerin. Keep it up dude, small updates trump no updates.

Note to self : linking TVtropes is a bad habit.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **June 16, 2009, 06:12:48 am**

Ascubis ducked behind the gaol doorway as the spinning bowl hurtled past him and shattered into pieces against the wall. He peered around the doorframe cautiously to survey the scene; one of the goblin prisoners had gone completely berserk, rattling the bars of his cage with incoherent fury. Gaol slops and pebbles were strewn around the room in testament to the goblin's search for missiles and the goblins in the neighbouring cells sported freshly blackened eyes and bruised limbs. Both now sat back on the far edge of their cages, well out of the mad goblin's reach. The two dwarves in the cells opposite looked bewildered.

"What the hell's going on here?" demanded Ascubis.

"No idea," said Frey. "Started about the time I woke up, gobber just keeps trying to kill anything that moves. Surprised he hasn't done himself in yet. If it's a break-out attempt, it isn't a very good one."

"Just gobber madness," muttered the taciturn Sergeant Nil.

"Well," said Ascubis, lifting his truncheon, "I'll put a stop to that soon enough." He marched over to the cage and gave the goblin a few orders to calm down before finally unlocking the door. The moment the door swung open the goblin launched himself from the other side of the cell, sailing through the air with claws outstretched and connecting neatly by the jaw with the end of Ascubis' truncheon. As the goblin tumbled to a heap on the ground, Ascubis brought the truncheon down sharply on his ribs, following up with blows to his arms and legs. He was well into the act of battery when he felt a hand grab his beating arm and felt a dagger against his throat. Diplomatically, he let the truncheon fall from his grasp onto the bloodied and broken mess.

"Not harm prisoners," growled a voice by his ear. "Against law." The dagger drew away from his neck and Ascubis felt the sharp impact of a dagger hilt against the back of his head before everything blacked out.

Stug finished dragging the unconscious form of the battered goblin into the cage and locked the door after him, having put his fellow guardsman in another cage to cool off. He turned to the dwarves, who gave the same explanations for the incident they had given to Ascubis. Unsatisfied, Stug questioned the goblins instead.

"<Hail,>" he said in the goblin tongue. "<What happened to Olsmo?>"

"<We do not know,>" said one of the goblins. "<He was fine for most of the day, but a little after mealtime he started acting very afraid, then very angry at everything. He claimed he could see things at the edges of his visions, spoke of a great pit waiting to consume us all. He got so angry, began attacking the shadows, then everything else until he descended into that animal rage.>"

"<Thank you, Baxu,>" said Stug. "<And you, Ngosa? Did you see any more?>"

"<Yes, friend Maggot,>" said the other. "<A dwarf came in after mealtime, when the other dwarves were sleeping. He gave Olsmo a drink from a copper flask. I only caught a sniff, but it smelled like those snake-men in the deeper marshes. Will he be alright?>"

"<Yes,>" said Stug with a nod. "<Olsmo lives.>"

"<I remember that dwarf,>" said Baxu. "<He had this strange tic with his eye, as if he was always getting flies in it. I did not trust his drink.>"

"<You were right not to to,>" said Stug. " <In this place, we are bound by laws as we were in the fortresses. The law of this place says you are not to be harmed, so I will assert it.>"

"<It is a strange law,>" considered Ngosa.

"<I certainly agree,>" said Stug and left.

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After a very hectic week, I finally have free time enough to prepare proper-sized updates (after this one, granted) and build a buffer again!

Also, an amusing tidbit. I started uploading the OK story to my writing 'blog (<http://iituem.blogspot.com>) (stolen straight from Heavy Flak, yes), and attempted to put up an AdSense banner.

Turns out that the use of fantasy naming conventions and words means that the AdSense crawler recognises it as being in a foreign language and won't support it. -.-

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Heavy Flak** on **June 16, 2009, 09:16:48 am**

Quote from: Iituem on June 16, 2009, 06:12:48 am

"<Yes,>" said Stug with a nod. " <Olsmo lives.>"

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Also, an amusing tidbit. I started uploading the OK story to my writing 'blog (<http://iituem.blogspot.com>) (stolen straight from Heavy Flak, yes), and attempted to put up an AdSense banner.

I want you to know, I did a double-take reading that. Really made my morning to wake up and see something like that inspired in such a fine story. Keep up the good work, Iituem, and keep up with that writing blog - it'll be like a monkey on your back biting your skull every time you don't upload a chunk of story.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **June 17, 2009, 04:50:53 pm**

*13th Slate, 354*

Jora wiped soot-laden sweat from her brow and continued to stir the massive spoon in the pot. Around her slaves in simple lintgrass or pipemoss clothing, most in far worse condition than her own tunic and cloak, carried blocks of coal to the kitchen fires or sacks of ingredients to the pots. She was surprised that she and Datan were allowed to keep their clothes, but over the course of her three-day incarceration she had gleaned that the pair looked threatening enough that none of the other slaves had dared try to take them yet.

When it had become apparent that neither she nor Datan were likely to retrieve their weapons immediately, the pair decided to keep their heads down and try to gather as much information as they could in preparation for an escape. This had proved markedly disappointing as their duties rarely gave them leave to go beyond the kitchens, a horrendous complex of stone hearths and storage rooms extending above the surface for ventilation and below it for the cold stone. The kitchens bore the same evidence of haphazard origins as the rest of the fort; most of the stewing cauldrons were not cauldrons at all but old iron laundry vessels presumably looted from sietches and townships. Having once disguised as a washerdwarf to evade the law in a distant human port, Jora claimed intimate experience with them, a level of expertise Datan had been more than happy for her to keep to herself.

What they had learned owed largely to the friends they had made and Datan's skill with numbers. The canny dwarf had made a judgement on the amount of slops grubbed together for the slaves, then the amount of actual stew being produced for everyone else and the number of proper meals cooked or baked per night, then divided them up into portions appropriately. With a little trial and error he reckoned Stonebreaker had about thirty trained and equipped military soldiers (who were eating sufficiently), maybe ten skilled artisans (who were eating from the pot with meat in it), about the same number of command staff and experienced soldiers (who were eating very well indeed) and eighty to ninety slaves (who were supplementing their diet with grubs, rats and in the case of the goblins, anyone or anything too slow or too dead to stop them). He and Jora had heard stories of slaves who had tried eating pebbles to fake the sensation of being fed. The goblins had not only picked the bones clean, but sucked the marrow out for good measure. Serving in Stonebreaker's forces apparently had a slightly worse life expectancy than a career in the cinnabar mines.

Within the kitchens the pair had become fast friends with a pair of dwarves, Petra and Caul (second name Dren, and yes he had heard all the jokes, thank you very much). Petra turned out to be an escapee from the big gaolbreak who had fallen on the wrong side of Stonebreaker's recruiting parties and ended up in the kitchens rather than the barracks. She was considered something of a veteran of the kitchens, having lasted nearly two years without succumbing to exhaustion, starvation or rank violence (though not for lack of trying, as her scars attested) and as such was entrusted to deliver meals directly to the high command and the artisans. This very position prompted a measure of envy in the other slaves, doing nothing to alleviate the fighting she was forced into on a daily basis. Kitchen gossip held she had a thing for one of the captains, Torir, usually followed by a couple of crude jokes about his massive hammer. Upon hearing these the girl would blush and look away hotly, but never actually denied the rumours. With a little cautious probing, Petra had let slip some details about the General and his goblin allies, as well as a bit of gossip about a new sergeant brought in to toughen up the recruits.

"I hear them talking, you know," she had said over a bowl of watery brown chow. "Sometimes they make me stay there to pour drinks for them. The officers are all in a fuzz about him."

"The new guy?" Jora had asked.

"Aye. Nirur - Captain Torir, he doesn't trust him. The dwarf turns up out of nowhere, bullies his way into a non-com and acts like he owns the place. They say one of the other sergeants brought him on. So who is he? The other officers don't seem to care. He's shaping the troops up like a real staff-sergeant, forcing them through drills and fighting for proper equipment for them, and so long as he keeps doing that it's all they want to know. Nirur doesn't like it. Wants to send him out on a mission, test his resolve."

"You know where?" Petra had shaken her head.

"They never talk tactics at the table. I got kicked out pretty soon after that, anyway."

Caul was another old-timer and actually entrusted with his own private cooking pot, although unlike Petra he was not regularly challenged for his position. Caul had gotten the job through a bloodyminded refusal to cook ordinary stews and even fine meals combined with an amazing resilience to bludgeoning, beating, whipping and having his head dunked into the privy, followed thereafter by the deaths of each slavemaster who had attempted to instill 'discipline' in him. After the third terminal case of food poisoning, the late kitchen master's successor carefully roped off an alcove for the dwarf on the grounds that he frankly had no idea how to do him in short of shooting him six times with a crossbow and driving an ice pick through his head. Caul had subsequently cemented his position by producing a series of

fantastic meals against all culinary logic, primarily from bedding, rat fur and discarded teeth found after slave pit boxing matches. He had also become General Stonebreaker's personal cook and food taster, at least partly on the grounds that nearly everyone in charge wanted to see him dead but nobody had the stones to do it themselves.

It was Caul who was finally able to use his unique influence to get Jora and Datan out of the kitchens. Having bribed him with a handful of slugs, a discarded bone and a lump of chalk (he had mentioned something about needing it for a fondue), Caul had convinced the slavemasters to give the pair of dwarves the job of taking the meals to the western wall where the wagon carrying their weapons had been sent. This raised no suspicions; it was common enough for kitchen slaves to bribe their way into fresh air, even for a few minutes. The pair of dwarves took covered pots of hot stew to the western guardhouse that evening, delivering them to the marksdwarves on the wall with servile bows.

After a few half-hearted words of abuse from the watchdwarves, the pair had left the guardhouse and begun prowling along the half-finished wall, searching for the blocks for new construction. They found the blocks stacked up in preparation against one wall, including to their great relief the very wagon they had brought in. Jora and Datan clambered onto the wagon with hopeful thoughts, turning swiftly to despair as they saw how many blocks had already been removed for construction, then even more swiftly to fear when they caught sight of the empty wrappings their weapons had been concealed in.

*Someone knew they were here.*

"I know you're here!" cried a voice from behind them.

Both dwarves spun around, gripped by terror. A marksdwarf had a crossbow levelled at them. His head was cocked and so was the bow. All four free hands in the situation shot up like daffodils. They could only make out his silhouette; with the moon behind him his face was hidden while their own were dangerously visible.

"Please, no!" cried Jora. "We're just kitchen dwarves!"

"Long way from the kitchen," said the dwarf, crossbow steady as a stone.

"We got lost," said Datan quickly, his eyes darting to the left and his thoughts racing. "It's dark, we barely ever get out of them, we just went the wrong way."

"So you decided to search for, what, ingredients?" Even though they could not see it, both dwarves could feel his eyes boring through them. There was a long, granite silence, marred only by the faint creak of tension in the crossbow's string.

"Please," begged Jora. "We won't get lost again."

The bow glinted unmercifully in the moonlight. Eventually the dwarf relented and spoke.

"Kitchens are that way," he said, indicating a street to their right with the bow. "Get going, and if I see you again tonight I'll shoot so I don't have to bother with questions."

The two dwarves nodded gratefully and ran down the street as if Gigin Herself was chasing them, the marksdwarf's eyes following them all the way. The silhouetted dwarf watched them until a faint reflection of orange light on a wall testified to the opening of the kitchen doors, then returned to his post on the walls.

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*Update Word Count: 1,422*

About 1300-1500 words seems to be a comfortable amount for the time I have available to sit down and write in a concerted effort at the moment, so let's stick that as the 'normal' update range. Still, hopefully back to meatier and more regular updates now!

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**Title: Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
**Post by: Bloogonis on June 17, 2009, 07:38:06 pm**

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Broose you vindictive bastard ;D

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**Title: Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
**Post by: Jim Groovester on June 17, 2009, 08:06:05 pm**

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I figure that Broose is mingling with the enemy to later betray them. Or maybe he's planning on joining them and betraying his comrades. At the very least, he's planning on betraying someone. And Brickbeard will probably play a large factor in his decision.

\*grits teeth and stares off into the distance\*

Brickbeard....

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**Title: Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
**Post by: Petra on June 17, 2009, 10:25:16 pm**

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Yay! Petra has been integrated into deh story! Woot!

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**Title: Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
**Post by: Iituem on June 19, 2009, 06:05:31 pm**

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Stug trudged through the busy main street of the town as dwarves milled back and forth along the rough brook in their daily business, truncheon at belt, shield on back. His eyes roved the crowd for his target until his ears found it, the jilted notes of an iron harmonica. He climbed the steps to the flat workhouse roof and plunged a hand into the trash heaps, dragging out a leather-jacketed dwarven minstrel and bringing the tune to an abrupt cessation.

*"What ho, fair watchdwarf! What troubles you so?"* asked a rather surprised troubadour, her stubby legs flailing as the thin-bearded guardsdwarf held her aloft.

"What?" said Stug, his brow furrowing.

*"You hold me aloft, what wish you to know?"* Stug tilted his head at the odd speech pattern, then shrugged and let the dwarf onto the rubbish heap again, keeping a firm grip on her jacket.

"Dwarf poison prisoner. Say dwarf with eye... move?" Stug struggled for the word for a moment, then gave up. "Music-dwarf know all dwarves. Tell who."

*"Well I don't know all dwarves, though I do try,  
Kel Ragebrew's the one with the errant eye."*



*A brewer of tonics, alchemy, beer,  
A merchant of dreams; a servant of fear."*

"Where can find Rage-dwarf?" asked Stug irritably, releasing the minstrel.

*"Why, e'en as we speak, he's down at his still,  
Brews respite for haulers; whiskey and swill  
To coddle their bellies and cloud their heads  
And send them with sweet dreams to their sweet beds."*

"Too much flower," growled Stug. "Why cannot just say simple?" The troubadour put her hands on her hips and narrowed her eyes.

*"I know you're honest, I don't think you're thick,  
But frankly, Stug, you're a pretty big-"*

The troubadour's stanza was cut off abruptly by the fingers wrapped around her throat.

"Just point."

She gestured mutely to the construction site of Urgash's upcoming dog farm, nestled against the southeastern corner of the town wall. Stug glanced to it, nodded and tossed her bodily back into the piles of refuse, paying no heed to the flowery but surprisingly explicit insults that followed.

Kel Ragebrew's still was a ramshackle affair constructed of a handful of disused construction blocks arranged into a rough table, several stone mugs for patrons and a number of copper and brass stills fermenting away under Kel's watchful eye, some of which he actually wore on a dogskin bandolier across his chest as a protection against thieves. Kel was midway through serving some shots of slatterjack to construction workers on their shift break when he spotted Stug heading towards him like a dwarf on the warpath. He grabbed the handfuls of dried firecaps on the makeshift table, stuffed them in his pockets and jumped atop the blocks to his customers' surprise, launching himself onto the lip of the town wall. He dragged himself onto the walkway and ran south along it as the guardsdwarf, in far better shape, leapt onto the rough stall and then to the wall, pulling himself onto the lip and making chase.

Kel hurried along the course of the wall, paying no heed to the Stug's calls for him to halt but acutely aware of the burning in his lungs. A quick glance back confirmed his fears; the guardsdwarf was gaining ground on him easily. He turned off the wall where it joined the Nishan chapel and clambered up the slanted roof, scrabbling over alternating orthoclase and microcline tiles until he reached the broad open dome. He turned, circling around the open roof until the arriving Stug was on the other side.

"Give up!" called Stug. "Have no where go!"

"You'll never take me, copper!" yelled the brewer, reaching into his pocket and producing one of Mincewind's 'specially prepared' firecaps. He flung it at Stug's feet where it exploded violently, causing the dwarf to lose his footing and tumble toward the open dome over the trading depot. Stug's arms flailed and by pure chance one found purchase on the dome's lip, screaming in pain as the force of his falling body pulling against his resisting arm wrenched his shoulder. Whimpering, he swung himself on his throbbing shoulder and caught the lip with his other hand, dragging himself back onto the lip of the dome to the rapt attention of the Nishan churchgoers below. He allowed himself a few seconds' rest before getting back to his feet and continuing the chase.

He ran along the wall until it reached the northern ridge, where he could see Kel hurrying down the steep slopes to the extremely relative safety of the desert below. He was already halfway down the mountain at this stage and Stug would be damned if he would let him get to those sands. The guardsdwarf unslung the broad iron shield from his back and dropped it over the wall, mouthing a prayer to Gigin as he leapt onto the shield and held on for dear life as it tobogganed down the rocky diorite slopes. Wind hurling against his face and the screeching of metal against rock in his ear, Stug managed through a mixture of luck, skill and bloodyminded rage to steer the shield straight into Kel's path, knocking the brewer to the ground and sending them both tumbling into a scratched and bruised heap in the sands at the base of the cliffs.

Stug was first up and used the advantage to scramble onto Kel and pummel him with his good arm until the dwarf seemed inclined to stay down. Then he slapped sense back into him and dragged his head up.

"Poisoned prisoner!" he barked. "No deny, have word of prisoners!" Kel coughed a little blood and blinked his swelling eye. Alas for him, it was not the one with the tic.

"So the gobbers talked," he spat. "Should've known you'd listen. So what?" Stug answered by banging Kel's head into the sands roughly.

"So against law! Not harm prisoner!"

"Why?" seethed Kel. "They do nothing but drain our resources, fill up our gaols! Who gives a damn if they live or die? Do you?"

"No," answered Stug truthfully. "But is law. Do not make, just enforce. What kind is poison?"

"Iss' tonic," said Kel, whose swelling tongue and aching head were making his speech slur. "Makes y'angry. Hass snage vemom."

"Cure," ordered Stug. Kel shook his head.

"No cure."

Stug narrowed his eyes and then plucked a copper vessel from Kel's bandolier, spotting the unusual floral design on it. He smirked as he spotted the brewer's twitching eye open wider than usual.

"If no cure," he said, unstoppering the flask, "*make one*. Justice is balance, yes?"

Pinning Kel's arms down with his knees and covering his nose with his good hand, Stug forced the contents of the flask down the brewer's throat. He stood up and trudged back toward the town with a little vindictive pleasure as Kel began to thrash and scream on the ground, his thoughts numbing with incoherent rage and haunting terror of the growing shadows at the edges of sight.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **June 19, 2009, 06:36:01 pm**

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Wow, the only way that chase could be better is with seventies action cop music.

"This Officer Stug; scumbag is mine."

*Emerin's Log*

While it's certainly not the weirdest thing I've ever seen, Stug chasing Kel Ragebrew along the walls is one of the strangest things I've seen recently. I better get a report about this.

Ah, wall chases. Brings me back to when I was stealing little amethysts from the shopkeepers back in the mountainhomes. Guardsman Cerol, he was a good sport. Always keeping an eye on me and chasing me up and down the walls or knocking over the towercaps I'd climb up, always with a harsh word about my father's parenting skills. I miss those days.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Nirur Torir** on **June 19, 2009, 07:37:32 pm**

I offer generic words of encouragement and praise.

I think Stug's my favorite character.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **June 19, 2009, 10:11:58 pm**

*Ragna's Log*

Stug dragged in the culprit of the poisoning today: Kel Ragebrew, our local drinks supplier. He was frothing at the mouth, clearly in some sort of insane, raging fit, and we had to wrestle him into a cage to keep him from harming someone. Im keeping him isolated from the other prisoners; i want to "talk" to him about this.....*incident*.  
Along with Kel, Stug brought back a bandoleer of various other liquids, and a search of Kel's home uncovered more, including a nearly empty barrel of snakeman vemon. Where did he get that? He must have stolen it from the caravan at some point. I need to keep these under lock and key, perhaps petition Emerin to get a vault dug. I now suspect that Kel was involved in spreading the drinks i banned earlier this year; I'll need to talk to him about that when he regains his mind.

Stug's report mentioned him chasing Kel across the walls, and the insane sled idea he had. We need more guards, to patrol both the walls and the city. I should start teaching the guards how to use bolas; they're a non-lethal way of restraining running suspects.

I had a look at the drink that Stug forced Kel to drink; it had nearly the same texture and smell as something the Elves call "Sederire", or, in dwarven, "Mind-Break", as evidenced in the incoherent rage displayed by Kel.

*Ragna's Thoughts*

Once again, I sense that discordant edge in the Force.....is it Kel's fault? No, the sense that was in his home was sharper, more present, not the looming, dull wave I felt earlier. I need to talk to the Elves; I've been avoiding those that come here to trade for too long. I just hope I'm still considered Amalaramana after all this time...

Nice job, and yes, we need chase music for Stug. Sorry if i took too many liberties with Ragna's journal.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Lord Dullard** on **June 20, 2009, 06:13:06 am**

Brilliant. I am still watching this thread faithfully for updates. It seems Stug is finding a niche in dwarven society after all. He may have to attempt another journal entry soon.

I'm curious to see just what Broose has up his sleeve. Whatever the case, it seems that poor Jora and Datan are going to have to find out the hard way...

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **June 20, 2009, 11:19:13 am**

journal. i am locked up in this cage for beating a berserk prisoneer. boy does my head ache. i wonder when i am going o get released. only time will tell. i hope i didnt hurt the goblin to badly.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **June 22, 2009, 07:36:42 pm**

*19th Slate, 354*

Jora and Datan glanced up from their pot as the heavy kitchen doors burst open and a handful of slaves were herded in by the drivers. Some looked excited, some fearful, others sick. The two would-be spies caught sight of Petra amongst the huddle, whose feet were stumbling and expression was numb. Abandoning their post, the pair guided the unsteady dwarf to her bunk. They slave drivers were busy after their recent arrival, so the pair were able to give Petra a little something to eat and drink until she could speak again.

"What happened?" Jora prompted when she judged the dwarf had recovered enough.

"It was the sergeant," Petra mumbled. "Sergeant Helmedentranced." Jora and Datan exchanged looks of furtive concern, then urged her to continue.

"It started not long after we left for Steppetoe..."

As Jora and Datan had heard before the party left, the new sergeant had physically whipped the fortress troops into something resembling a militia and had on Captain Torir's orders prepared to engage them in a training exercise. Slaves from throughout the fortress had been gathered for the march, expected to serve as cooks and labourers for the battallion during the night. If the slaves had been surprised by it, the troops were outright shocked at the news that the slaves would be fighting as well and the soldiers would be taking an even share of the labour work.

"An army that cannot build its own encampments," Sergeant Broose had explained, "is an army that will wake up to find the enemy let in by the ones who did, and a soldier who cannot cook his own food is liable to die at the spoon of the one who did."

Not that this had been any relief for the slaves. Petra and the others had still carried heavy loads of supplies and tools, only now the soldiers were doing the same. It had quickly become clear that nobody needed that much equipment for a five day expedition, resulting in many of the soldiers actually carrying backpacks full of rocks. This had struck up a particular storm with some of the goblin knights (*rors*, in their tongue), used to having a crew of slaves to carry their belongings. Five of them had ambushed Broose's tent during the first night after embarkment. Three of them were missing fingers and carrying double-loads the next morning, swiftly sending the message down the line that the new sergeant did not much care for traditional goblin heirarchy.

"How do you reckon the Captain's going to take it when he finds out about the *rors*?" Petra had overheard Brickbeard saying as she hauled a portion of his gear; some dwarves were getting away with light loads at least.

"I don't give a rat's arse what Torir thinks," Broose had replied, very deliberately carrying his own pack as he marched. "The General knows that he would rather lose two upstarts who won't get in line now than a whole battallion to the first siege we run up against because they were too lazy to bring their own supplies."

"How will the other *rors* take it, though?" fretted Brickbeard, who had something of a grasp of the social dynamics of Threepools. "Stonebreaker's alliance with the goblin clans isn't exactly iron-shod and, well, he's always respected their tradition of slavery before."

"He hasn't respected their tradition," Broose laughed harshly. "He's been killing off the leaders in suicide raids and slaughtering the slaves building that fortress. How many dwarves has he sent out to die, hm? Not a fifth of the number of goblins, I'd wager, and belike as not

those who've displeased him. Always use the mercenaries first, Brick, so when they're spent your dwarves are still fresh. Else they'll be fresh when you're worn fighting, and be the first to put their blades to your throat."

"So why bother bringing them aboard? Why not just use dwarves from the get-go?"

"Fortress like that takes a lot of dwarf-power, goblin-power in this case, to build. Can't get that from the dwarves, not enough open rebels left in the kingdom. Besides, why make your own forces hostile with deadly labour when you can have someone else's do it? Slaves are useful for getting a lot of work done quickly, but reliance on them makes you weak." Broose smirked. "What, you thought dwarves don't practice slavery out of some sense of nobility? Once that fortress is done though, well, let's just say you ought to be glad you're on the dwarven side of that equation."

Petra herself had been glad to be a dwarf at that time, though not so glad to be a slave. When the evening of the second day had come and the camp had been made, the sergeant had ordered the slaves to begin sparring in preparation for the morning's work; Steppetoe was not far ahead. Broose moved between the pairs and threes of slaves fighting one another as the soldiers formed rings to jeer and watch; an entertainment cut short by the sergeant's swift assignment of sparring sessions to the recruits as well. This inspired more than a little jealousy amongst the dwarves at seeing the sergeant give fighting tips to the slaves (many of whom fought better, if dirtier, than the soldiers) and one ill-considered corporal had taken issue.

"What's the point of training them?" he had jeered. "They're only going to die against some elf's sword!"

"I often wonder the same about you," Broose had muttered, then dragged Petra at random from one of the bands of sparring slaves. Her opponent took a chance overhand swing at the opportunity, but the dwarf brought her club up despite the sergeant's grip and struck the slave in the hand.

"You," Broose barked. "Do you serve the General?"

"I, I'm a slave," stumbled Petra, surprised at the question.

"So do you serve the General or not?" demanded Broose testily.

"Yes," said Petra quickly. "Yes, sir!" Broose let her go and turned back to the corporal.

"The girl here fights for the General, which makes her as good as you, sunshine. Better, actually, as she seems to remember the fact. Now get back to your training, corporal, or you'll be feeling a dwarf's axe long before you get the chance to experience an elf's sword close up." When the grumbling soldier had returned to his sparring, Broose turned and addressed the slave dwarf.

"You. What's your name?"

"Petra, sir," she replied.

"You fight before? Outside the pits, I mean."

"Yes, sir. Hammerdwarf, sir. Training for the city guard."

"How long?"

"Year's basic training, sir, then ten hard labour. Commander got too close on the night training was completed, needed surgery." Broose grunted approval.

"Ever see the elephant?"

"Sir?"

"Combat. You know, elephant? Raging war elephants attacking you in violent droves, fires of battle raging in your ears? Felt like everything was going to Boatmurdered around you?"

"Not as such, sir, no. Reinhammers had good defences, I never saw any real action."

"Well, that'll change. Get back to practice, soldier, you're leaving your left flank wide open."

The next morning, the troop of soldiers and slaves marched across the sands to the sietch of Steppetoe, barely a hamlet of sixteen dwarves marked in the sands by a handful of stone posts. There was no battle as such, the mere presence of so many soldiers forced a surrender in minutes and a handful of beatings and one brief exchange of metal wrested picks and axes from the few defenders who refused to give up immediately. By the end of an hour all the supplies of the sietch, enough for a year to those sixteen dwarves, had been hauled out of the grotto and packed into the backpacks of the soldiers in place of the rocks they had carried on the way. Four of the dwarves, the strongest of them, were bound and brought amongst the troops to be pressganged into service. Sergeant Helmedentranced considered the remaining twelve, then gave orders for the troops to surround them. As the regimented soldiers formed a ring around the prisoners, he picked out six of the slaves he had thought most promising from the night before, including Petra.

"Take up weapons," the sergeant ordered in a low voice.

"Sir?" asked Petra.

"That was an order," he stated. Petra found a well-used steel hammer being pressed into her unresisting hands by one of the recruits; the other slaves took their weapons more readily, each confused, hesitant or, as Petra thought, strangely fearful. One or two of the slaves not chosen looked away.

"Form rank and face the prisoners," ordered the sergeant. With the other five slaves, Petra formed a loose phalanx of two rows, facing the frightened dwarves huddled in the ring.

"Execute them."

A brief, choked silence erupted into shouts from the pressganged four, murmurs from the slaves and screams of terror and for mercy from the prisoners. Petra felt her breathing quicken, her pulse race. The dead silence of the soldiers rang out amongst the chaos.

"But-" she protested, "but they're unarmed! They're not even resisting!"

"You were given an order," said the sergeant coldly.

"They're not the enemy!" she shouted.

"But you were given an order."

"I can't do this!" Petra yelled, throwing down the hammer. The women and children had broken into open bawling now, holding one another tightly and crying out to the Gods. "It's not right!"

"Right has nothing to do with it," spoke the sergeant in a slow voice, his face the very steel mask of Gigin. "Justice has nothing to do with

it. You are not a guard, you are not a watchdwarf. You are a soldier. Your job is not to think, it is to do. Your job is to follow orders."

Petra opened her mouth to protest again, but could do nothing but choke on the tears in her own throat. She wanted to tear her mind away from the madness around her, to avert her eyes from this horrific creature speaking to her, but somehow she could not turn, she could not escape. The thing of steel before her spoke soft words in cold tones that cut through cacophony like an axe through bone, splintering her mind and drawing all focus she had toward it.

"Your job is to follow orders," it said, "or to die at the hand of one who will."

Petra wrenched her eyes from it and turned in search of support as the sickness in her gut brought her to her knee. She found none, not in the five damned souls beside her, nor the screaming masses of flesh before her, nor the silent ring of steel statues upon whose axe blades her fate now rested. The last shreds of sanity bled away and the steel spoke once again.

"You have your orders."

Her eyes were dead but her hand found purchase on the fallen hammer's hilt, purchase on the one certain thing in the chaos. She stood up straight and turned. The wall of steel advanced towards the flesh.

Petra brought her knees up to her chest in the bunk, huddling. She did not speak for some time.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **June 24, 2009, 04:07:47 pm**

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*23rd Slate, 354*

Four days after Petra's return from the massacre at Steppetoe, the order came to march again, this time to war. The bulk of the soldiers prepared their equipment and supplies, well-stocked with the haul from the raided sietch, for the two-day trek to Holddeep and the possibility of a siege. If it were possible the level of bustle in Threepools actually managed to increase beyond its usual chaos, forcing the two spies well into kitchen duty during the preparations. The order came from above that most of the slaves would be marching with the army as support and shock troops. Jora was rather cynically inclined to believe the rumour about the General thinning the ranks. In the scant hours before dawn that the fortress finally slumbered before the heavy march, Jora remarked as such. Datan, in the bunk below her, grunted.

"You don't believe him?" she asked.

"I'm not sure what to believe right now," he said tiredly. For some reason neither could sleep, though both were exhausted. There were a few moments of silence as neither wanted to pursue the line the conversation would take.

"You ever killed anyone?" Jora asked eventually.

"What?" grumbled Datan, turning onto his side. "Of course I have, you've been there when I've done it."

"Yeah, I know. I didn't mean goblins, I meant-"

"Yes," he said in a tone that both cut her off and staved the next part of the question. Another awkward silence followed. "You?"

"Yeah," murmured Jora. She rearranged herself in the bunk, listening to the relative quiet of the kitchens, still broken by dozens of grunts and whistles from heavy breathers, snorers and occasional night time flatulence. "Self-defence, mostly."

"Lucky."

"I said mostly." Jora shuffled again, uncomfortably. "You ever worry about it?"

"Doesn't do me any good," said Datan, avoiding the question. A brief flash of the tin dwarf in the mists touched the back of his eyes for a moment. He shook his head like a horse dislodging flies. "All my enemies are in the ground."

"I've never thought that phrase worked well amongst dwarves," Jora commented philosophically. "I sometimes wonder if they might be waiting, you know? On the other side."

"I think there's worse things for you and I to worry about on the other side of that veil." The shadowy figures taunted Datan from the edge of consciousness. He couldn't tell if he was dreaming already or if this was just some long-lasting effect from the drink. He felt himself sinking towards them again, to the fight that kept returning to him in his dreams, when Jora's voice mercifully brought him back to the waking world.

"I've never been in a battle."

"What?"

"I've never been in a battle, Datan! Not a scuff, I've been in plenty of those, and we've held our own against bands of goblins and hell, more than a few open street fights. I've just never really been in a war before. Not on the front, not like this."

"Lucky," Datan repeated.

"I'm scared," Jora confessed. "I'm scared I'll die, or worse that I'll have to live my life as a cripple. I'm scared that I'm going to die in a dirty little hole somewhere, in ragged, muddy clothing and treated like a slave, probably to archers or traps. Worse than all of that, though, I'm scared I'll break and run, like with... with..."

"Goden," Datan finished for her. He opened his eyes and looked up. Jora had twisted to face him over the hammock and nodded slightly, her lips pressed together in apprehension.

"Then you're sane," he snapped. After a moment he added in a tone less harsh; "Though a noble kind of sane, Jora. Maybe you know a bit more about loyalty than I'd have been inclined to think. Seems my judgement on that isn't perfect, lately." He drew in a deep breath and exhaled.

"There's three kinds of people when battle starts, Jora. The first kind are terrified, so scared of everything around them that they bolt. They run, abandon their friends, get in the way of formations and if they don't die on their own blades or an enemy's, they'll meet the Hammerer when they're caught. They're cowards and most of those don't make the battle anyway. The second kind are scared too, but they're the ones who keep their head on the job in hand, who'll piss themselves from the fear but go ahead anyway. That's courage, Jora, and those dwarves? Well, some of them die too, but they've got a hell of a better chance of escaping Deler than the first sort, especially if they've got more than half a wit about them and know how and when to fight and when to run."

"And the third sort?"

"Those are the ones that don't feel anything, fear or otherwise. They're lucky if they manage to get themselves killed, though it's not for lack of trying. Those are the ones who don't care about anything. Rich or poor, saint or slaughter, live or die. Those are the monsters."

"What do you care about, Datan?" Jora asked. Datan turned onto his side and stared into the abyss.



"Good night, Jora," he said, closing his eyes.

"Good night, Datan," he heard the dwarf say as the violet shadows reached out to slay him again, cackling filling his ears.

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Short update again, but the next one would be better done as a single large update or possibly two large updates. Also needed to cleanse my palette before moving onto it after that last scene. Not particularly fun to write. -.-

On the bright side, if anyone wants a fortress marksdwarf, this is a good time to ask for one!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 24, 2009, 05:23:28 pm**

((I've been following your excellent story and figured I might as well request one.

Name: Eilam  
Gender: (either)  
Profession: Hunter/Marksdwarf/Hammerdwarf (in that order)

His family in the mountainhomes was a poor one, despite his father being a proficient bonecarver. Because of this once he was of age he asked his father to make him a crossbow and some bolts and he began hunting to help provide food, as well as extra bone and leather. Quiet and introverted he doesn't really like cities much, and doesn't mind sleeping just about anywhere.))

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Kanute** on **June 26, 2009, 04:10:25 am**

I'm hoping we'll see some of the architectural styles and fortifications mentioned a few updates ago back in Olonkulet, especially with such a potent hostile force nearby. These updates are fantastic, but I'd be lying if I said I wouldn't prefer for the fort to grow so I can get my dwarf, instead!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **June 26, 2009, 11:01:44 am**

Don't hold back on the crazy when building stuff.  
Fantastic writing.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **June 26, 2009, 05:37:27 pm**

~*Intermission*~

Ulvruffeldolf cheered as he rifled through the little chest of gold and silver rings. He even tried a few on for size, though getting them over his stubby fat fingers proved more trouble than it had been worth. Still, the trading with the Gibdan humans had proved more than profitable and at logn last after that whole gold prospecting fiasco he was finally on the up and up again! He tried on a cheap crown he had picked up as a trinket - or so he told his guards, unwilling to admit he had fallen prey to a con-man with some very shiny brass - and exchanged the chest of rings for a tin of ruli flour biscuits spiced with surrar and a faint hint of emmon juice.

The fat merchant dwarf's human guards glared at him with little love. Ulvruffeldolf paid them a skint wage for the cargo they protected and the way the dwarf carried on in his cloth-of-gold robes and expensive meals did little for the loyalty of men who persisted on dry tortillas of desert maize and flat sooba beer. Were it not for the promise of paychecks at the end of their voyage and the fact neither man trusted the other not to slit his throat after the dwarf's, Ulvruffeldolf's good fortunate would have been extremely short-lived.

Which is not to say that it was not going to be already. The merchant, seeing the columns of marching dwarves approaching across the desert sands, made the extremely poor decision to ride toward them.

"Hail!" he cried as the camel approached the front of the foremost column. Three dwarves in armour marched at the front, halting to stare at the spectacle. One of the dwarves had a thick black beard and wore a shining steel breastplate with the insignia of a captain painted on it. To either side were a younger dwarf with an ochre beard and an older dwarf with a blonde one, beginning to show signs of silver. Both wore sergeants' stripes. "Would you be interested in buying some of my wares?" He smiled brightly, to the amazement of the three dwarves. The two human dwarves looked at each other. One of them put his face in his palm.

"What do you have to offer?" asked the ochre-bearded sergeant with a coy grin.

"Well, I recently acquired some very nice gold rings," explained Ulvruffeldolf as he dismounted the camel. "I also have some silks available for trade, as well as a number of fine cheeses and some sacramental wine!"

"Excellent!" grinned the brick-bearded dwarf. "We'll take them."

"And what will you be offering?" asked the merchant as his two guards slowly crossed over to the column and took positions up facing him.

"You don't seem to grasp the situation," suggested the captain, "although it appears your fellows do. We're not trading. This is an army. We're going your possessions and there is nothing you can do to stop us."

Ulvruffeldolf looked perplexed for a moment, his chubby face scrunching up as he tried to figure this out. The expression slowly eased into one of abject terror as the reality of the situation dawned on him. One or two of the dwarves in the column suppressed a smirk; the brick-bearded one didn't bother suppressing it. One of those who did not smile at all stepped forward, a brown-bearded girl with cold, hateful eyes and a heavy iron hammer.

"Should we kill him?" she asked in a worryingly unconcerned voice.

"Nah," laughed the brick-bearded sergeant. "Let him live, what's he going to do to us?"

The girl did not immediately step down, instead looking to the blonde sergeant for confirmation. He nodded and she stepped back into formation. The captain spoke up as a pair of speardwarves stepped out to take the camel away.

"We are not wholly barbarians," he said. "We leave you with what you carry and may you manage to survive on it in the desert. Go, oh king in yellow. Take your biscuit box and your brass crown and run for your life."

Ulvruffeldolf opened and shut his mouth a few times as he tried vainly to form protests, then finally broke and ran as fast as his stubby little legs could carry him. It looked like he was a pauper again.

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Just a brief intermission to buy some time, the next post will take a bit longer to do than I expected. :/

Once this little arc is over, we'll be headed back to the fortress for a bit and hopefully I'll be able to take some time to see what Frey and Ousire are up to, amongst others. Khain, too! He hasn't been forgotten. I'll try and go through time a little faster as well, but I needed to set up the arc properly first.

Also considering (once we reach a stage where I can play the damned fort again) whether to start using Dwarf Companion to convert some of those prisoners we keep catching into viable citizens. Since there was talk of the implementation of a bit of goblin architecture and all. Would also be quite useful for making fully dwarven armies in the future. Tee hee.

Oh, and fear not Kanute! This is far from the last we'll see of poor Ulvruffeldolf! Since he can't actually get into the damned game for another gods-damned year or more (the Baron hasn't appeared by where I've played to) he'll get a bit of airing now and then in Not-Fortress Mode.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - M/W/F)**  
Post by: **Petra** on **June 27, 2009, 01:40:13 pm**

*Dreams Of Petra*

*Screams and blood, begging voices. A swirl of red and red hands gripping a drenched hammer. Petra stands amidst a plain of blood. In the distance she can barely hear screams. In the distance, there is nothing but bodies. Does the killing ever end?*

Petra wakes abruptly in the camp. Did she dream? She doesn't remember. It's only a huge spider crawling across her face. Petra slaps it and frowns. Ewww... spider guts. A bit of sand gets most of it off, and she's back asleep.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **June 29, 2009, 09:26:20 pm**

**Holddeep**  
*25th Slate, 354*

Like many dwarven settlements on the plains, Holddeep was a twinned town comprised mainly of dwarves in a traditional underground complex with a smaller client population of humans living in the surface buildings and tending to the open fields surrounding the settlement proper. Although often possessing surface populations barely greater than a small village, some of the dwarf towns held scores of citizens labouring away beneath the rock. Haltriver, the capital of the plains demense of the Searing Crypts, was no bigger than an ordinary human town on the surface but concealed a tremendously well-defended populace of over three hundred.

Holddeep was itself considered secure; a wall surrounded much of the human village, two men or three and half dwarves high and a man wide. Although distant from the goblin fortresses to the north, raiders were still known to reach the desert's edge and confrontations with Gibdur had been fought in the past. Still, a force of sixty dwarves and goblins on the march was something for the small town to be concerned by. When the invaders were first sighted, archers on the towers started yelling orders for preparations and the town filled with bustle as defenders ran to get into place.

They need not have hurried. The army marched a circle around the town two bowshots distant, more concerned with establishing a perimeter to prevent messengers escaping than rushing straight into battle. Inhabitants of the cottages that tended to the croplands had fled into the safety of the town's walls before the army had arrived, but in the haste to secure the town one or two latecomers had been left to the mercy of the army. They played no further role in the siege, but their houses were torn down and what scant trees in the area could be found were hacked apart by dwarven axes for the manifold needs of war; shelter, fortifications and those parts of a siege engine that did not require pre-manufacture. A number of Threepools' specialists were siege engineers and they had travelled with the force to ply their trade. By evening, fully-constructed catapults and short siege walls had been dredged up around the circumference of the town where the army camped. The defenders of Holddeep spent a restless night waiting atop their walls for the attack. Before the next dawn, it came.

Datan spun around, ducking and dodging the blows of the hazy violet figures, trying to get away from his position. He felt the approach of the silvered dwarf behind and charged, cleaving through one of the violet attackers with his axe and charging away. He made it nearly twenty feet before the bolt of darkness emerged from his chest and he found himself falling down the mountainside again, tumbling towards that endless blue mist. Just before he hit it, a hand reached out and grabbed him by the shoulder. Datan jerked his eyes open and grabbed it forcefully.

It was Jora, and he was looking up at the dull blue of the night sky above Holddeep. Many of the fellow slaves were asleep. Her brow was furrowed, her lips thin.

"You're going to want to see this," she said.

The pair crept through the snoring, rag-covered bodies of dwarves and goblins, many of which would likely lie in cold mud by the end of the morning. Datan thought it strangely fitting they should sleep like the dead in preparation. Jora took them outside the camp, behind the fresh but still sizeable stump of a tree. Tucked under the thick roots were a pair of heavy packages.

"I was trying to sleep when someone started throwing pebbles at me," Jora explained. "I got up to find out who saw someone hiding behind this trunk. By the time I got here they'd gone, but I found these instead." She drew the familiar sabre from one of the packages with a soft song of steel. "What do you think?"

"I don't think," Datan replied harshly. He unwrapped the other package and ran his fingers over the polished hickory staff of his axe. "What I *know* is that we have weapons now, and armour. We need to do something."

"Yeah, we can r-" Jora began to say, but her words wilted as Datan gave her a look that said more than words could. Goden flashed briefly in her mind's eye and she drew her lips tight. She spoke again in cropped words. "We can't take on the whole army ourselves."

"Not with Broose on their side -"

"If he's on their side," interrupted Jora.

"- no," finished Datan. "Maybe we can get into Holddeep and try to get them out. Or maybe we can shore up their defences. Either way, let's get out of here before-"

"Hey!" called a voice from the camp, though not too loudly. "You two, come help get the others up. We've got orders to assemble in rank, quiet as possible. No lights until command gives the signal." Jora and Datan glanced at each other.

"Right you are," said Datan, watching as the figure wandered away to wake the other slaves. Military discipline apparently was not strict in the slaves' part of the camp; the dwarf had neither shot first nor bothered to ask questions. A lucky break, though it meant the two had little chance of making it to the walls unnoticed as Datan had begun to plan. It did not matter too muc, he had still to figure out how to get to them without being shot by the defenders.

"Looks like we're getting into Holddeep the easy way," muttered Jora, pulling on her leathers. "Or the hard way, depending on how you look at it."

"Where's the General?" asked Claspreadies, checking over his crossbow. Dwarves were too short to work longbows effectively, so he stood apart from the rank of four human archers at the front of the column. There were twelve in all, four to each of the groups of twenty surrounding the city. "Thought he'd be here to see the first real battle."

"I imagine he is," said Brickbeard, swinging his battleaxe in one hand, then the other, loosening his muscles in preparation for the order. The sergeant kept one eye on the archers and one eye flicking between the two other columns around the city. The camps had been struck quickly and quietly and the troops martialled into position before the pre-dawn light had arrived. It was just beginning to filter through over the distant swamps to the east.

"I don't see his standard, though that could be the light. Can't see much at all."

"Don't worry, that'll change soon enough." Brickbeard nodded meaningfully at the trough in front of the archers. "Though if Broose judged it right, Stonebreaker's definitely out here."

"Where are you?" muttered Broose as he scanned the two columns in position. Petra, standing behind him like a dog waiting for its master, cocked her head.

"Sarge?" she asked in a quiet voice. Some distance behind her, goblin siege engineers stood ready by one of the three completed catapults.

"Stonebreaker," said the blonde soldier. "He's watching the battle, I know he is. Somewhere in the ranks, or the supply train. Bah. Mind on the task in front of you." Petra remained silent, but her head turned at the flash of light from one of the columns. Broose set his jaw and jammed his helmet over his head. "There's the signal."

Captain Nirur Torir watched the two columns as their torchlights flickered to life in response to his own. He gave a nod to the standard bearer wielding the flaming shaft of wood and pulled on his centurion's helmet, the visor painted with a rough red streak in honour of Gigin's own. The captain hefted his warhammer and barked orders to the column behind him.

"Troops at the ready!" There was shuffling behind and in front as the soldiers and slaves adjusted themselves in position. Slaves carrying heavy wood and leather barrier shields stood at the fore-ranks of the column, shivering with night cold and fear. Two hefted the trough before the rank of archers. Torir lifted the hammer as a sign to prepare and the war cry welled from the soldiers behind.

"By your command!"

"Catapults fire!" cried Torir. The goblin siege operators cut the tethers and all three catapults hurled their loads at the town walls, two striking the tops and shaking the masonry but one (relatively) harmlessly flying over and landing in the streets below.

"Forward march!" he yelled, pushing forward with the slaves at a steady march. The other two columns began to press on, slaves stumbling and hurrying to keep pace with the measured progress of the soldiers pressing them on from behind. Soon enough the first arrows from the defenders began whistling through the air towards the column, most falling short or plunging into the barrier shields but a couple managing to strike slaves at the fore. One shrugged through the pain and kept moving, the other fell and was trampled swiftly by the boots of his own side.

"Quick march!" ordered Torir, the column hustling forward under the flights of arrows, soldiers raising their shields above them. Dangerous as they were, Torir took heart in the reduced number of arrows in the sky. The General had estimated a score of marksdwarves and archers amongst the defenders, enough to give their army trouble in a straight offensive, but forcing a three-way split had weakened the enemy rather more than it had Stonebreaker's own, principally melee forces. Archers were best employed en masse, where they could beat the odds of arrows running stray. Or with a few dirty tricks.

"Halt!" barked the captain. "Plant shields!" The shieldbearing slaves at the front planted the wooden barriers and huddled against them for support and protection, as did most of the other slaves. The warriors raised their shields and formed a tight shell against the arrow-fire. Torir's torch-bearer brought his carried fire down onto the trough carried by the slaves.

"Archers, light your arrows," commanded Captain Torir as the torch-flame spread rapidly across the trough of lamp oil. The human bowmen nocked cloth-wrapped arrows and lowered their bows to light them. At the other sides of the town, two more lines of fire appeared in the waxing pre-dawn glimmer.

"Draw!" The archers stepped back, lifting the bows and drawing the strings back across their faces.

"Aim!" The archers tilted the bows up, aiming through the gap in shields and over the town walls.

"Loose!" The command rang thrice about the town's edges, once from each knot of shields and barriers. Twelve tiny sparks of flame arched over the town walls. Several skittered harmlessly into the town's dirt road or upon walls and one struck an unfortunate citizen in the chest, but enough found their mark in the thatched roofs of the human inhabitants to start the desired conflagration. Another volley of flaming missiles made it over the walls before the attacking commanders decided the defenders were sufficiently distracted to make their advance. Cries ringing from all quarters, the three columns charged the walls, bringing up long siege ladders while the catapults made their second round of fire. Heavy stones plummeted over the walls, one catching a defending archer squarely in the chest and taking him over the edge. Despairing archers shot their last few missiles and swapped bow for axe as invaders began clambering over the side.

Two of the first up the ladder under Brickbeard's command were Jora and Datan. Jora leapt over the edge, kicking one of the defenders back as Datan hauled himself up. Another defender, a silver-bearded dwarf, prepared to strike at him with his axe, but paused in surprise as Datan wrenched up the goblin climbing after him and threw it down the ladder, knocking down several of the invaders. Datan kicked the ladder away and turned to him, wielding his own axe cautiously.

"Friend or foe?" challenged the silver-bearded dwarf urgently.

"Friend!" shouted Jora. "We're spies and we're on your side!" She spun around as a dwarf tried to get over the side and stabbed downward furiously with her sabre, repeating Datan's trick of knocking down the invading troops. The two spies fell back to the thin rank of defenders as the silver-bearded dwarf beckoned the eight surviving troops to a gatehouse at the corner of the wall.

"We might stand a chance in here," he grunted. "Who're you, anyway?"

"Jora and Datan," said Datan bluntly. "You are?"

"Captain Urnridled," said the dwarf. Jora peered at him oddly.

"You have a brother, by any chance?" she asked.

"Half-brother, yeah. Tried to find some town in the desert, bloody fool. Look, this is hardly the time for small talk, is it?" Urnridled glared at the invaders, having finally clambered back up the ladders, approaching the guardhouse in a rush. He set his axe and prepared.

"We're from that town!" Jora called, stepping into the attackers with her blade and sending a human pikeman sprawling into the town streets and the contents of his belly onto the walkway. "He made it!"

"Oh good! Maybe we can have tea together!" yelled Urnridled, cracking a dwarf's brain open as another defender behind him fell to a

goblin mace. The goblin tugged on the mace, trying to get the flanges out from the body, a problem made swiftly irrelevant when Datan's axe blade severed his arm.

"And crumpets!" laughed Jora gleefully, revelling in slaughter as her sabre cut through another pair of attackers. "You have to have crumpets!"

"Cap'n!" yelled one of the defending dwarves from the doorway at the other side of the guardhouse. "They're coming in from the other s-" He was cut short. Datan assumed the arrow sticking out of his eye had something to do with the matter. As the dwarf fell, he caught sight of the dozen onrushing troops before the pressing matter of a swinging maul brought his attention back. He side-stepped, but the maul still struck him hard on the shoulder. But for the heavy layer of muscle there his collarbone would ahve broken. The blow still took him to a knee.

"You will die!" cried the goblin in a gleeful voice, battle-madness gleaming in his yellow eyes. Datan swapped grips and brought the axe cracking into the goblin's ribs with his off-hand.

"Not this day," he growled, wrenching the axe free. The goblin's mace proved strangely fortunate as the stones around him shattered with the impact of a catapult rock striking the guardhouse. A flying stone passed through where his head would have been had he been standing. A quick glance confirmed that two of the other defenders had not been so lucky.

"Stop genuflecting and get moving!" shouted Urnriddled, backing towards the stairwell down to the human town. "We can't hold this with five!" Datan stood and hurried with Jora and the surviving defenders to join him, parrying strokes from the attacking men and dwarves as they descended and hurried through the streets toward the stone entrance to the grottos below. The doorway was essentially a stone bunker with two enormous sandstone gates. The remnants of the defending archers, already more than halved in number, ran towards the gate. Urnriddled's survivors made it there last, performing a fighting retreat against the growing numbers of attackers. Just as the group reached the doors, a bolt shot clean through Urnriddled's gut. Jora rushed to help him, but Datan held her back. He knew a fatal wound when he saw one, even if it wouldn't be immediately so. He locked eyes with Urnriddled, who saw it too. The grey-eyed captain held his abdomen and turned, readying his axe.

"The trap switch is at the end of the hall," he grunted, eyeing the approaching horde. "Tell my brother..." He searched for words and then cursed for lack of them. "Ah, he knows." As Datan dragged Jora down into the grottos, Urnriddled prepared to make his final stand. Datan was secretly glad not to hear it as he and Jora rushed to the end of the long corridor leading into the grotto, yanking down the heavy leaver at the end. Counterweights fell and the heavy sandstone doors swung shut. The soft creaking of hidden gears testified to the activation of the traps under the hallway, which soon became as silent as a snake and no less deadly.

"Damn turncoats," muttered Brickbeard as he approached Broose and Captain Torir, standing by the stone doorway and the butchered corpse of its silver-bearded defender. To Urnriddled's credit, three bodies gave him company, two of them soldiers. "Put a dent in my column."

"Hey!" shouted one of the human soldiers, waving his spear. "Why aren't we going after them? We can take 'em!"

"First of all," growled sergeant Broose, "when I want you to speak I'll tell you. Do it out of turn again and I'll wear your tongue as a garter-strap. Secondly, we're fighting *dwarves*, sunshine. You're free to walk down that hallway if you can wrench the door open yourself, but I'd bet a hogshead of ale you'd be minced finer than sausage by the second step."

"So what do we do, sarge?" asked Petra in a rather more level voice. Hints of brain stained the end of her hammer and she had a vaguely distant look in her eye.

"How do you get rabbits out of their hole?" said Torir, ignoring the fact she had interrupted. "Broose, Brickbeard, get your dwarves to gather up every scrap of wood that isn't burning yet. Holddeep will be ours by daybreak."

-----

Bumper sized update today to make up for Friday. Would have written enough to complete the siege, but it's 3AM and I'm too tired to continue. That will get added on sometime in the next two days.

Also, changed the update schedule. The *actual* schedule is the same as it was before, only now it's *accurate*.

Also, added a sort of poll to sate my curiosity on something.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **June 29, 2009, 09:47:28 pm**

What was the name of the town that was just sieged? Helmsdeep? Oh wait, Holddeep.

Excellent update.

Not to be a downer or anything, but this would have been an excellent opportunity for ASCII art.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **June 29, 2009, 10:42:16 pm**

hehe. awsome update! ;D

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **June 29, 2009, 11:00:38 pm**

nice ^^) :D

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Duke of Nawn** on **June 30, 2009, 04:10:50 am**

In response to the poll, I personally check certain stories here obsessively for a week or two and then spend another few weeks after that completely neglecting them.

Notes

Fondue was okay. Need more chalk to try again, maybe Limestone substitute? Fighting tomorrow. Stay focused - good ingredients on battlefield? Corpses good for roasting fires?

ps, remember not to get stabbed

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **[deleted]** on **June 30, 2009, 05:19:46 am**



Sorry I haven't been writing for Fath. I honestly feel like I can't do his character justice in face of your writing, so I haven't bothered attempting. Regardless, I'm still keeping up with every update and loving it. Please continue on with the great story!

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Mad Larks** on **July 01, 2009, 06:21:11 pm**

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I'd like to request a dwarf for this marvellous story;

Name: Murdoch  
Profession: Unhinged Inventor  
Actual profession: Mechanic

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **July 01, 2009, 06:30:42 pm**

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Jora and Datan hurried along the glowbulb-lit corridors of the Holddeep grotto, soon enough reaching a dining hall where some forty dwarves and a handful of humans were gathered. Most looked glum, though not especially concerned given the gravity of the situation. A quarter of the surviving defenders were gathered with them.

"Identify yourselves," challenged one of the guards suspiciously, his axe still at hand from the overground battle.

"Jora and Datan," said Jora. "We're on your side, Captain Urnriddled brought us in."

"And where is the captain?" asked the guard.

"Fell at the gate," said Datan shortly. "Gigin will it, he took more than his fair share with him." The guard studied Datan's face as he delivered the news, then nodded and lowered his weapon.

"Where's your escape route?" asked Jora.

"What escape route?" asked one of the dwarves amongst the citizens sat at the dining table. He stood out from the rest by his distinctive leopardskin cloak and hood.

"Your route out. You know, in case of *invasion*?"

"Young lady," said the hooded dwarf tiredly, "this is a *dwarf fortress*. We have food and water down here for an entire year. We don't have a second entrance because the one entrance forces invaders to go through the corridor of death. Even if they try to dig down, we can build barricades and reinforce the walls. The invaders will run out of food long before we do."

"What's your name?" asked Datan.

"Gethro," said the hooded dwarf. "Dungeon master to Lanternwebs before it fell, exiled here for my allegiance to my Duke."

"Alright, Gethro. You say you can last a year. Reckon you can last an hour?"

"What?" asked Gethro, puzzled.

"Breathe," said Datan. Gethro frowned, sniffing the air. When the other dwarves saw his eyes widen they too began taking deep breaths. Faint but palpable, the smell of smoke had begun to thread through the air.

"They wouldn't!" exclaimed Gethro. "That would kill all of us! Surely they would want slaves!"

"Only if you stick around. How long do you reckon they need to keep stuffing burning wood down the air vents before you run out?"

"They're smoking us out," said one of the dwarves, a trapper. A couple of clueless looks from some of the hardcore miners prompted an explanation. "When you hunt rabbits and other burrowing animals, they go to ground out of the reach of your dogs. So you set up a bit of a fire and blow smoke down the hole. If they stay down there, they'll die, but before that happens they'll try and escape. That's when the trapper gets them with the dogs at the entrance."

"So tell me," repeated Jora, "and I want you to think very carefully on this. Where's your escape route?" A panicked silence cloaked the dining hall. Jora tensed as the wisps of smoke started to become visible, waiting for the rush of terror. She shut her eyes and prayed she could get to the trap lever before the mob tried rushing over those tiles in the panic.

A cough shattered the tense atmosphere like a mace.

"Ah, excuse me?" piped up a very small, very crooked old dwarf in the corner of the room. Nearly ninety eyes turned to him in desperation. "I heard you fine young folk mentioning about an escape route, yes?"

"Yes," said Jora hurriedly. "Do you know of one?"

"I know of many fine escape routes," wheedled the old dwarf, "but all of those were in other fortresses. Like the time in Tinfurnace when we slid down that chute through the magma lake, or the one in Murderhold when you had to pull the levers just right or the whole second floor would flood and then collapse. Or that fine time in-"

"Do you know of an escape route here?" demanded Datan urgently. Some of the gathered dwarves were looking bewildered.

"Now don't interrupt me, young laddie," said the old dwarf. "The name's Oldbeard by the way, and you should really show respect to your elders, don't you know. Nobody makes escape routes like they did in the old days and I'm really not very impressed by it all. Now where was I? Oh, yes, that fine time in Purgestopped where the escape route passed through the tombs with all the caged undead that would jump out at you if you didn't know the correct password. Of course, the secret was that it wasn't a password at all, but rather a contrived series of clicks and-"

"For the love of the gods!" shouted Jora. "This is a life or death situation here! Do you have something of relevance or don't you, you befuddled old codger?!" The old dwarf blinked his rheumy little eyes in puzzlement.

"Well, I just thought you might want to know that the cistern supplying this here town actually used to belong to the *old* Holddeep, located half a mile to the east of here. Of course in those days it wasn't known as Holddeep, but rather Copper-"

"Okay, back to the present day, Oldbeard," said Gethro hurriedly. Some of the dwarves were starting to cough. "How does that get us out of here?"

"Well, the old access shafts would still be there on the other side of the cistern, wouldn't they?" replied Oldbeard as if this was patently obvious to the densest of fools. "Of course, they bricked them up after the marmot famine of '23, on account of moving the entire town a half-mile to the left, but I suppose some of you fine young folk have pickaxes, no?"

A stunned silence followed, splintering nearly immediately with cries of relief and miners hefting their axes. Gethro signalled for the dwarves to follow him, leading down the tunnels. As they hurried, Jora and Datan joined him, increasingly aware of the smoke in the corridors.

"This group seems a bit small for a whole fortress," said Datan.

"It's a quarter of the fortress," explained Gethro as they turned left from the main walkway down a side corridor, the dwarves behind moving to double-file. "There are four dining halls. Instructions in the event of a siege are to go to each one. That way if invaders break through the defences, we can cordon off each part."

"Shouldn't we go get the others then?" asked Jora. Gethro looked distant for a moment, but his stride did not falter.

"No," he said neutrally. "This is the closest hall to the cistern and as your friend says, we do not have long. It is bad enough that the cistern is at the bottom level; if we were to delay and get the others first we might well have no air to breathe down there when we reach it. You are soldiers, yes? Accept this misfortune; it is better that a quarter of us are free than none."

The group continued down the corridor, smoke filling networks of rooms from the air vents on either side. They descended a series of steps, single-file, coughing frequently breaking out through the group until at last they reached the cistern at the lowest level of the grotto. Built to supply a fortress of a hundred and sixty at full capacity for a year, the cistern in some ways resembled a small lake, albeit an oblong one carved out of solid rock. Thin ledges, just wide enough for a dwarf to walk on, surrounded the outside of the cistern; apparently even a vast underground water supply needed occasional maintenance. What looked like a soft mist rolled over the still, dark waters, though in reality it was a choking smog. The group of forty carefully side-stepped along the edge, carrying glowbulbs from the fort above for weak illumination in the otherwise unlit cistern chamber. After what felt like an eternity creeping through the stifling, smoke-filled darkness, the group reached a platform on the far side with ladder rungs carved out of the rock, leading upward to a shaft. The top of the shaft had been blocked up, but a few heavy swings of picks and one incident with a block falling on someone's wrist cleared the blockage and brought fresh, sweet air flooding into the smoke-ridden, stale chamber.

The escapees emerged half a mile to the west of Holddeep; apparently Oldbeard's memory wasn't perfect. As the last of them was helped over the lip of the hidden hatchway, dawn broke over the eastern marshes of Kulettögum, highlighting the crippled town in shades of gold and rose, billowing with smoke from burning thatch. The exiles watched soberly as their hometown fell to Stonebreaker's army.

"Where now, then?" asked one of the dwarves. "The other towns are already full since Lanternwebs was razed and its own refugees split apart." He thumbed pointedly at Gethro, but fortunately there was no malice to his tone.

"We can't stick around," said another, holding a baby to her chest. The little infant was coughing, but alive and well enough. "Those dwarves and goblins will be out searching for us when they come to do a headcount."

"We'll have to split up," said Gethro decisively. Protests arose almost immediately from the gathered dwarves; many had spent their whole lives as neighbours, or many years at the least. They were understandably loathe to part ways so abruptly.

"We have no choice," explained the dungeon master. "No one town can take all of us. We all stand better chances if we split up into groups of no more than six and migrate to different towns. Unless any of you has a better suggestion? And founding a town isn't a better suggestion, by the way, as we have no tools, no supplies and nothing but what we've grabbed."

"Actually," said Jora, glancing at Datan hesitantly, "we might have an alternative..."

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Good point about the ASCII art. Alas, busy with a certain other thing right now (I'll post about that soon enough) and do not have the two additional hours it would take to do ASCII of the invasion just yet. Possibly I may add it in later.

Deleted, go ahead anyway! I don't give Fath enough screen time, so feel free to write what he may be up to in the meantime. Community input has changed the course of this story a few times already (e.g. *the entire Kel Ragebrew sub-plot*).

Also, I've started to get a little more familiar with Dwarf Companion, though I haven't used it on Olonkulet yet. It does give me the power to make OK a multi-race city, however, which would definitely make an impact on how this tale goes in the long run. How do we as a community feel about that? The default position is keeping it primarily dwarves, but this way would have advantages such as being able to rehabilitate some of the gobbo prisoners etc...

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Remalle** on **July 01, 2009, 06:37:46 pm**

Copper? Copper**blazes**, by any chance?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Rysith** on **July 01, 2009, 06:42:30 pm**

Hooray! Jora got to speak with Oldbeard! And she's on the right side again!

I really need to get around to integrating Oldbeard into Lanternwebs sometime...

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Nirur Torir** on **July 01, 2009, 06:43:59 pm**

I approve of the use of goblin prisoners as slave labor. And elves as slave labor to the slave labor.

I'm not always commenting on it being a good story, since that gets really redundant after a few posts. Keep up the good work.

The answer's probably obvious, but what's with the lone letters in the title?

Oh, and yay to Captain Torir not walking into an obvious trap corridor.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **July 01, 2009, 06:48:43 pm**

So many shout-outs to other stories. Awesome.

Ragna approves of rehabilitating prisoners, but not enslaving them.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **July 01, 2009, 06:49:51 pm**

Quote from: Iituem on July 01, 2009, 06:30:42 pm  
"For the love of the gods!" shouted Petra. "This is a life or death situation here! Do you have something of relevance or don't you, you befuddled old codger?!" The old dwarf blinked his rheumy little eyes in puzzlement.

My continuity spectrometer is buzzing. I think Petra is outside with Brickbeard and Broose and Torir.

Quote from: Iituem on July 01, 2009, 06:30:42 pm

Also, I've started to get a little more familiar with Dwarf Companion, though I haven't used it on Olonkulet yet. It does give me the power to make OK a multi-race city, however, which would definitely make an impact on how this tale goes in the long run. How do we as a community feel about that? The default position is keeping it primarily dwarves, but this way would have advantages such as being able to rehabilitate some of the gobbo prisoners etc...

I'd be fine with it, so long as there were legitimate storyline reasons for why the other races were there and it didn't feel like a Saturday morning cartoon.

Quote from: Nirur Torir on July 01, 2009, 06:43:59 pm

The answer's probably obvious, but what's with the lone letters in the title?

Days the story will be updated.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **July 01, 2009, 07:04:28 pm**

so this means that other races might be coming to live in Olonkulet?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **July 04, 2009, 04:21:12 am**

A leathered axedwarf stood before the gathered crowds in Holddeep, helm removed and bloodied axe resting casually at one side. Were it not for the dwarf's stance and expression, he would be undistinguishable from any other. With the helmet removed, though, he shone like a glowcap in mud. Stonebreaker - for who could doubt that it was he? - held a continuous pose like a lion about to strike, as if by sheer willpower alone he restrained himself from leaping forward and tearing out your throat. His eyes continuously scanned the crowd, not darting about furtively but deliberately roving as if to stare down each and every person in turn.

Captain Nirur Torir and Sergeants Brickbeard and Broose approached him, along with a string of other distinguished fighters during the battle. The remainder of the troops were keeping a cautious eye on the captured citizenry, freshly smoked out of the tunnels. As expected a few had died trying to escape in the rush before the trap corridor was disengaged, leaving only a charnel slurry on the stones to mark their passing, but the rest had been successfully pressed into service.

"General," said Torir. "The town is yours. We can begin stationing troops here immediately and once the smoke clears its resources will be at our disposal."

"Is the smoke going to be an issue?" asked General Stonebreaker. One of the other dwarves present, an engineer, shook his head.

"We'll have to set up some windmills," he explained, "power a few sets of fans to extract all the bad air out, but after that it should be fine."

"Make it so," ordered the general. He turned to the dwarves gathered and spoke.

"We have had a fine victory here today, but it will be only one of many! This success is owed to your training and discipline far more than any mere act of might! Half of you will thus remain to keep order here at Holddeep, while the other half shall return to Threepools to continue your training under Captain Helmedentranced."

Captain Torir's expression set slightly, but he made no more of it. The general smirked.

"*Commander* Torir will remain here to oversee the handover of Holdpass. You are to obey him as you would me. Now, certain of you have distinguished yourself by bravery in today's fight." Stonebreaker turned to the line of dwarves and Brickbeard handed him a small wooden box full of little magnetite stars. Stonebreaker walked down the line, placing the little metals against each dwarf's chest or helmet and receiving a word of thanks from each one save the last, who kept his head down instead.

"Have you any word to say?" asked Stonebreaker, stepping closer.

"I do," murmured the dwarf without looking up.

"Then go ahead and say it." The dwarf looked up and bared his teeth.

"Death to the betrayers!" he shouted. "For the Queen!" The dwarf drove the hidden shortsword upward.

Before any other dwarf had time to react, Stonebreaker had already sidestepped the blade, caught it, wrenched it from its wielder and turned it around. The sharper ones were just focused in time to catch him driving it through the assassin's collarbone. Everyone else in the crowd just saw the dwarf slump to the ground, bleeding freely over it.

Stonebreaker stood, giving a slow, hard grin to his officers before stepping into the crowds. The dwarves parted for him like seas for a prophet. Broose watched him leave, following him with his eyes each step of the way. He had only ever seen one dwarf move that fast before, and as far as he knew Ragna Stockadebow had never had any apprentices.

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Partial update. Second bit a little later on today, likely. Why not check out something else (<http://iituem.blogspot.com>) while you're waiting?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **July 04, 2009, 02:49:47 pm**

Ominous!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Keldor** on **July 04, 2009, 06:27:12 pm**

I'd like to request a dwarf.

Keldor: Gray-bearded blacksmith, in his mid-60s. Deeply traditional, and suspicious of technology. He was just about ready to retire when (then) Captian Stonebreaker "resupplied" his forces there, stealing everything not nailed to the ground, and burning the rest to "make sure the goblins can't use it against us". Keldor escaped with the clothes on his back and his grandfather's smithing hammer, and survived by doing odd jobs, mostly making horseshoes, nails, and belt buckles, for a couple years before coming to the small fortress that would one day be known as Olonkulet...

Keldor would love nothing more than to put a spearhead through General Stonebreaker's torso, perferably one still glowing red from the forge. Or perhaps just pour molten lead down his pants. But failing that, and realizing that he's probably too old for battle anyway, he'll be content just to forge the axe that some other dwarf will crack Stonebreaker's skull with.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Nirur Torir** on **July 04, 2009, 09:22:40 pm**

Yes, commander! I have a funny feeling that my character will be slain before the story is done though.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Redhades** on **July 05, 2009, 09:49:29 pm**

Oh snap! Gethro just made it into the story!  
I totally did not expect it to happen this way.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **July 06, 2009, 05:45:35 pm**

2nd Felsite, 354

Fora finished packing the dampened sand over the grains of wild maize, stretching her back and leaning on the old iron hoe. She peered out over the red sands, studying the desert below. Taking a swig from a wineskin at her belt she squinted at a little trail on the sand. Her eyes widened when she recognised it being caused by a group of forty-some dwarves trudging toward the mountain. Fora dropped the hoe and ran for the town walls to alert the guard.

"Okay, give it a half turn clockwise!" yelled Fath from one end of the gateway. Ousire wrenched the spanner around the stone mechanisms, the chalk squealing in protest as it tightened. She gave it a final tug and signalled to Fath.

"Come on, come on!" hurried Danielle, standing by the Giginite shrine with a clipboard and looking over the rather loose militia that had been formed to back up the three dwarf active guard force. Without time to organise a real militia, it had been a case of every dwarf in the town grabbing a suitably sharp or heavy implement and making their way to the gate. Even Emerin was there, albeit well toward the back.

"Are those things ready?" Danielle prompted, glaring at Fath.

"Aye, lassie!" cried the engineer, signalling to Ousire to close up the exposed mechanisms and get out of the way. He pulled a lever embedded into the wall and shouted to a line of four dwarves with small stone balls stood before the gateway. "Launch the test bowls!"

The four dwarves took a step back and carefully bowled their ammunition forward through the gate. As they passed through, the seemingly smooth chalk split opened and slid back, dozens of seized goblin weapons snickering out with deadly speed and force, plus a few iron spikes Yngwie had crafted for the purpose before her demise. Once the balls rolled all the way through, Fath signalled to a pair of dwarves by a small millwheel to begin turning it. As they did so, a hidden counterweight was cranked back into position and the trapped weapons retreated into the ground and were concealed once again by the smooth chalk paving.

"Alright!" called Ragna, longsword at hand and facing the crowd. "I want everybody to stay inside the walls. Do not rush the enemy. Let them come to you through the traps. If they start firing arrows, get into the protection of the Giginite shrine or the barracks! That should force them through the murder hole. Ascubis, Stug and I will target their archers. If we have to evacuate, Khain will be waiting at the Onolite spire and you are all to evacuate down the stairwell, where Frey and Emerin will be able to break through the wall at the base with their picks."

Ragna turned to face the open gateway and, after Fath had disengaged the traps, stepped through to meet the mob approaching the town. The mass of dwarves halted a bowshot away from the walls and two leathered dwarves strode forward. One of them pulled off her helmet and shook out her distinctive blonde hair. She grinned and patted the sabre scabbard at her side.

"Captain!"

The beerhall was too packed to contain everyone, so the doors had been forced open and building blocks stacked into rough tables and chairs to accomodate the migrants. Mincewind, Fora and a heavily bruised and battered Kel made their way between the tables with pitchers of alcohol. Jora, sat with Datan, Khain and Ragna in the beerhall proper, cast an eye at the brewer.

"So he got off with community service?" she asked of Ragna. "I'm surprised you trust him."

"Emerin's call, and mine," said the captain. "Stug was very thorough in punishing him for resisting arrest. So thorough that the ordinary beating or imprisonment was probably covered in the process. There was execution, of course, you can't execute prisoners of war without orders."

"But?" asked Datan.

"But there aren't all that many of us, and the only other capable brewer is Urgash, who's already overworked. Emerin made a decision to let him go on that. After Stug had another 'word' with him."

"I was wondering why those bruises looked so fresh," said Khain. "So where's Broose? I thought I'd have seen the old dog in this mess somewhere."

Jora and Datan exchanged looks.

"You're going to want another drink for this..."

"I don't trust it," growled the grey-bearded dwarf at Fath's pitch. He looked to be of middle age, muscled and with dark tanned skin. "Doesn't seem right, gears and weights doing the work of a stout dwarven arm."

"It's all perfectly natural, Keldor," explained Fath. "Think of it! Dwarven guards can grow tired, hungry. They need to change shifts. But wi' these new trap mechanisms and the control systems to guide them, we can have guardians at our doors every day! Arm or gear, the force and the direction is the same."

"Aye, but can I trust a machine? Can it give me its word not to betray me? Will it stand by my side in battle, or uphold its honour?"

"Och, if i's loyalty ye're worried aboot, tha's no problem neither. A machine cannae think any differently than what ye tell it, so i's the same thing."

"No," said Keldor, shaking his head. "No, it's not. But I'll make your parts, engineer, if it'll give me access to the forge to make real weapons as well. Twice I've had my home taken from me by a mad dwarf. If some young soldier can stop a third time, I'll go along with this madness for their sake, not yours."

"Bah," snorted Fath, quaffing some ale. "Here, let me show ye some o' the new thinkin' algorithms..."

"It's a matter of trust," explain the hooded dwarf casually, spreading his hands.



"But still," protested Emerin. "Your own private apartment, an office - larger than mine, I might add - and a reserved tomb to boot? Don't you think that's a little excessive?"

"Not at all," said Gethro. "I think that these small concessions of status will go a long way towards ensuring cohesion amongst my people and yours. Particularly if you'd care to throw in a new armour and weapon stand as well."

"When you say your people-"

"I of course mean the people," continued Gethro smoothly, "but right now they do look to me for leadership. Of course, we would prefer you to remain the guiding hand of government here in the town, having done so well previously. Your common origins are hardly a detriment to you, you have a skill for it."

"Hold on a minute-"

"I see your dwarves have enjoyed a plurocratic existence so far," the noble dwarf pressed on, "but you have to understand that the dwarves under my guidance are very much used to having nobility to guide them, and if it were to come to a popularity contest..." Gethro smiled serenely and placed his hand on the shoulder of the dwarf sat by him.

"Take Eilam here, for example. Eilam here was a hunter and is a capable marksdwarf, are you not?"

"I've shot my share of game," conceded the marksdwarf, looking to the decidedly outpaced mayor. "In fact, you seem to be lacking marksdwarves of your own here. I can help with that."

"Do you have much experience outside of hunting game?" managed Emerin, trying to steer the conversation away from Gethro.

"I've shot my share of gobbers too, ma'am," said Eilam. "Grew up in the country, got drafted when the old goblin war happened, received my training there. Dodged the draft when the Queen made her war, but my mother and father didn't." He looked away for a moment. "I hope they realised his skill and put him to work making bolts," he said softly. "He always was a much better bonecrafter than a fighter."

"What I mean to say," continued Gethro, taking charge again, "is that Eilam here can train up more marksdwarves and help bolster your defence here. Marksdwarves who will be used to seeking aristocratic leadership." He locked eyes with the mayor.

"I see," she said sourly. Gethro smiled.

"I'm glad you do. I'll be needing chests and cabinets for my belongings as well, by the way." Emerin balled her fists under the table, but smiled sweetly where it was visible and turned to the new marksdwarf.

"So, Eilam, where were you trained?"

"Actually, I was recruited into a squad under the tutelage of a Sergeant Helmedentranced..."

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And so we return to the fortress proper! Also introducing a couple of new faces and getting back on track with the main story. Today also harkens an update to that other thing (<http://iituem.blogspot.com/2009/07/iron-orb.html>) I write, for those who follow it.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **July 06, 2009, 07:31:20 pm**

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*Emerin's Log*

I suspect that this Gethro character is nothing more than a skilled confidence man, but he wouldn't be the first of his kind to ascend to leadership here. But there is one key difference between him and me. Authority found me; I didn't want to be mayor, but everybody else did. He, on the other hand, is looking for it, and he's using every resource available to him.

If I had known that this was what he was up to, I might've let the traps do their work. But if Ragna's report on behalf of Jora and Datan is accurate, and I have no reason to doubt that it is not, I need his help. We have too few men to defend against Stonebreaker's army, and Broose has betrayed us. Gethro has a firm grip on his people, and I can't ignore his offer to lend us their strength.

Really, though, Gethro is just the middleman between his people and the people currently living here. I'd rather he weren't there. I'd talk to Ragna about it, but she has those staunch morals. Maybe Frey would be more receptive.

Wait a second! I can't get rid of him! This is just the opportunity I've been looking for! I missed robbing the nobility blind of their riches! I can do that again now! This is great!

Calm down, Emerin. You're the mayor of... what the hell is our little town's name? Whatever, you're mayor. You can't be thinking about petty theft when there's an army marching to the walls.

*Another entry*

I've had an odd dream. I was staring at a building. Parts of it were metal, brass I think, and it was bright and shining. Brass gears turned, and the repeated mechanical sounds were oddly soothing. Then there was another building. Also metal, but some if it had rusted over. There were dirtied brass gears that had broken through the side of the building, and they were shaking awkwardly on their axes. The sounds of machinery were broken up by groaning metal and awkward crunches.

I hope Kel Ragebrew isn't up to his old tricks again.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Keldor** on **July 07, 2009, 12:43:22 am**

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Journal of Keldor:

That dwarf is mad! I know a wee bit about mechanics, me father taught me a bit when I was a lad, how ye tie a rope off to a stake, then run it through some hooks along the floor and walls, an' hang a heavy rock from the other end. Then ye take a small blade an' fix it to a stone slab, cut to match the floor, an place the slab over the rope, so's when a goblin steps on it, the blade cuts the rope an' the rock falls on their filthy head. Simple but deadly. A lot of forts have gone through years with no defenses much more complicated than that.

But I also be knowin' that these traps be like a double edged sword. They can be cuttin' ye just as easily as the goblins. That's how me grammy died, she tripped over a fleeing kobold an' landed straight on top of one of those pressure plates!

Now that crazy dwarf explained how ye could make a simple trap smarter, like if ye wanted to catch a dragon, ye'd support the pressure plate with some goblin skulls, so's a dwarf could walk across it without harm, but the dragon's weight would crush the skulls and set off the trap.

Sure, that works fine in theory, but what if a dwarf happens to be carryin' a heavy stone? What if one of those goblins was less thick-skulled than the norm? There be all sorts of ways it can break an' cause death an' misury! The only way to be really safe is to avoid those machines entirely.

But this mechanic, he wants to turn the entire fortress into a machine! Worse, he wants to make it so smart it can tell a friend dwarf from a foe dwarf! Mark me words, that be sure to fail, an' some poor dwarf will be reduced to minced meat. I'll just have to see that that dwarf don't be me. I'll have to be extra careful, an' keep an eye on that elfy mechanic. An' mayhaps I'll get meself a walkin' stick, so I can test the ground before I step on it.

Perhaps his machine will kill more foes than friends, but I'd still rather have an' axe in me hand an' a helm on me head than trust to that.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **July 07, 2009, 08:19:51 am**

Don't worry Keldor, soon everyone will be thinking the same thing about machines.  
It'll bee too late then. Ahahahaha.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **July 07, 2009, 08:49:56 pm**

oh armok

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **July 08, 2009, 08:10:13 pm**

Emerin's Log  
5th Felsite, 354

About half the immigrants opted to stay here in the town, the rest have opted to disperse to the surrounding sietches and make homes there instead, including the pair of humans that made it out of Holddeep with them. No doubt they'll still want to rely on us for protection if things get tough. I've asked Frey to go meet with the sietch leaders about that, we need a more concrete grounding of how this is going to work. I would send Broose, but...

Betrayed? I find that hard to believe, but Jora and Datan were adamant that he had stayed behind with Stonebreaker's troops. He had the chance to leave twice before - why didn't he take it then? Perhaps Stonebreaker made him a better offer.

Broose's replacement, Eilam, started training up a new marksdwarf squad today. Four youths from amongst the Holddeep refugees, all gangly and thin-bearded but angry at Stonebreaker and willing to fight. Hopefully they can use the walls to their advantage.

8th Felsite, 354

Threw a party today at the Nishan shrine in honour of our newer members settling in. Was well-received, although a bit harder to sell the fact many would be spending their leisure time (and a bit of sleeping time) in the shrine as well due to the housing shortage. The apartments are all full up and we're having to use the shift bunks at all hours, which means dwarves only get to sleep when a slot is free. Might have gone worse, but was able to lean on Ragebrew to give everyone a free tankard at the party to make them more amenable. Curious how long I can keep squeezing him like that.

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Mini update, for which I apologise. Ver' tired, spent most of the last two days working on that other thing (<http://iituem.blogspot.com/2009/07/wooden-coin.html>), which requires a heck of a lot more editing and polish work. Will add more today/Friday to get up to quote on wordcount.

By the by, love the journal posts from community members. Really helps develop characters in ways I don't always get time/opportunity to do in the main story. Much love.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Aldaris** on **July 09, 2009, 03:00:07 am**

][Mincewind's log][  
Well, I guess I can't run anymore. I've ran away from all danger up to this point, the problem here, though, is that this is pretty much the safest place around, and people still die every so often.  
Still, I've sort of settled in, although there's nobody that wants to eat anything I ever make, on the bright side, I found some weird herbs in a jar burried in the sand somewhere, after a few experiments, I think they're pretty good spices, they'll probably work well in combination with dried and ground firecaps and some cooked glow wine...

(Oh, and in case you weren't sure, yes, that's one of Kel's stashes that got revealed by an unfortunately windy night.)

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **July 09, 2009, 06:29:27 am**

*Danielle's Inventory*  
9th Felsite, 354

16 cases of panic, night fevers and hallucinations so far. Kel Ragebrew is back in gaol until further notice. Most popular claims are seeing blue mists, a dwarf melting and some sort of purple hippopotamus taking tea with scones.

12th Felsite, 354

Ragebrew released following a bit of research. Turns out all afflicted parties made the questionable choice of eating one of Mincewind's rock cakes. Excuses given; not actually made of rocks for once. Ragna has refused to prosecute on the grounds that at least the kook actually used real ingredients this time.

I've ordered Mincewind off cooking duties for her own and everyone else's protection. She can mix cement instead.

18th Felsite, 354

Mincewind taken off cement mixing duty; somehow produced cake mix from lime.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **July 09, 2009, 12:02:50 pm**

journal.

it has been some time since i last wrote.. ??? but i just found out mincewind made cake badder from lime.....HOW IS THAT EVEN POSSIBLE!!!!!! i dont know what to beleive anymore. oooh more marksdwarfs...hopefully they are good enough to hold off any siege long enough for the foot patrol to come and deal with the rest.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Aldaris** on **July 09, 2009, 12:19:48 pm**

][Mincewind's journal][  
And now they even take the cement mixing from me! How else am I supposed to make a living, siege operator?!  
You just watch, they'll be actually agreeing with that and suggesting I use my cakes as ammo...

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **July 09, 2009, 12:45:56 pm**

lol now someone has to make a mod so that u can use cakes as ammo :D

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Aldaris** on **July 09, 2009, 01:14:21 pm**

Quote from: scuba on July 09, 2009, 12:45:56 pm  
lol now someone has to make a mod so that u can use cakes as ammo :D

And crumpets.  
A catapult-launched crumpetspam might actually take down Ironblood.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **July 09, 2009, 01:22:05 pm**

lol true

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Mad Larks** on **July 09, 2009, 08:26:11 pm**

Quote from: Aldaris on July 09, 2009, 01:14:21 pm  
Quote from: scuba on July 09, 2009, 12:45:56 pm  
lol now someone has to make a mod so that u can use cakes as ammo :D  
And crumpets.  
A catapult-launched crumpetspam might actually take down Ironblood.

I imagine Ironblood eating so many crumpets that he ends up exploding because he ate too many damn crumpets. Like...oh, whats his face, that fat bloke who blew up after eating a whole lot of food in Monty Python's Meaning Of Life.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Aldaris** on **July 10, 2009, 01:29:34 am**

Quote from: Mad Larks on July 09, 2009, 08:26:11 pm  
Quote from: Aldaris on July 09, 2009, 01:14:21 pm  
Quote from: scuba on July 09, 2009, 12:45:56 pm  
lol now someone has to make a mod so that u can use cakes as ammo :D  
And crumpets.  
A catapult-launched crumpetspam might actually take down Ironblood.

I imagine Ironblood eating so many crumpets that he ends up exploding because he ate too many damn crumpets. Like...oh, whats his face, that fat bloke who blew up after eating a whole lot of food in Monty Python's Meaning Of Life.

Yeah, that's what I was thinking, of course, he'd have a second try with being chosen of armok and all. Anyway, let's not derail the thread any further, 'kay?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **July 11, 2009, 10:46:21 am**

*Emerin's Log*  
*25th Felsite, 354*

Frey returned today from his tour of the sietches and the general feeling is that we do all have a common enemy in Stonebreaker, but the sietches are quite protective of their independence. A meeting has been arranged at a local plateau near the base of the mountain, an outcropping of rock named Olonakil, or Gearpoint.

One of the masons started gibbering today, frothing at the mouth over his ale (and not as a result of the ale, either). He insisted on everyone calling him "The Breed of Sewers" and started carting tetrahedrite out from the stocks to one of the workstations. Any time someone tries to negotiate with him, his head turns 180' and he spits pea soup at them. Mostly he chants in insensible tongues, but two phrases keep emerging; "The Dripping Darkness" and "The Divine Betrayers Betray Once More!".

*1st Haematite, 354*

The air was thick with uncertainty when the groups reached Gearpoints; a shallow mesa of dolomite in the sand, roughly likened to a six-toothed gear. Emerin's own party of four consisted of herself, Frey, the Nakasian priestess Karana, the crippled speardwarf Khain and at both his own and Frey's insistence, dungeon master Gethro. Emerin vaguely recognised Toolbridges from the sietch of Catchwater, along with his wife and nephew, but had to rely on Frey for the names of the leaders from Brimclosets, Sandstops and Armdread. The leader of sietch Armdread, Rimbearer, strode forward with a belligerent glare in his eye.

"So you're looking to own us, is that it?" he demanded. "Starting a fief of your own?"

"Not really what I had in mind, no," said Emerin, raising an eyebrow. "This is about protection, yours and ours, against the greater threat of-"

"Oh, I see!" laughed Rimbearer derisively. "It's 'protection', is it? You'll be wanting taxes, that's how it starts, and soon enough you'll be after the shirt on my back! You even brought the bleedin' aristocrat to hammer the point home, if you don't have a Hammerer yet yourself!"

"That's actually not-" Emerin began, but was unable to successfully interrupt Rimbearer's tirade.

"Well, I won't stand for it! I say that we can manage well enough on our own without any of your help! Neither I nor my sietch will have any part in this!"

"Then by all means," said Gethro in a calm, firm voice, "do not let us detain you from your business." He locked eyes with Rimbearer, whose boisterous expression became a little less certain.

"Fine!" he shouted. "I will! We're going, and we strongly urge everyone else to do the same!" Rimbearer stormed away, his companions following him with more than a hint of uncertainty. Emerin gave Gethro a puzzled look.

"What was all that about?" she asked.

"Sometimes dwarves come to a conference not to hear anyone else's voice, but to boast how well they can speak themselves," the dungeon master explained. "Take my advice as someone who has been in politics for a long time, Mayor, you do not need that sort of person. The only regret is that his sietch will suffer for his pride." Emerin shook her head and turned to the remaining sietch representatives.

"Very well then," she said. "First of all I wish to thank you all for taking on the refugees you have. I understand how difficult this can be." Emerin smiled to herself at the thought of the last three years; she really did. "We all face a threat in General Stonebreaker. Some of us might agree with his motives; who would want to be ruled by an elf? This does not excuse what he does in the name of that. Holddeep has experienced what it means to be his prey and some of you have suffered against him directly." Emerin nodded to Toolbridges, who still used a crutch.

"I believe that the best course of action we can take is to join together in defence against him. My town has walls, mechanised defences and infratstructure that the sietches do not but we lack the resources and space to simply move everybody there, even if there was the will amongst you for such a thing to happen. We can also field less scouts and advance guard than the sietches can. We offer protection and defence in case of attack, but ask for your axes in return to help make it happen."

"Call it what it is," said the representative of sietch Sandstops, a female dwarf named Cuphammer. "You ask our fealty."

"Yes," said Gethro boldly, stepping forward alongside Emerin, "but we ask it in the truest sense of the word, not the distortion it became in the secure halls of the Mountainhomes. A promise to serve for a promise to protect. A promise of benefit to everyone, both now and in the long term. Alone, the sietches will fall. Alone, our town will fall. Yet a council of representatives as exists in the human lands is too slow, and each sietch deciding for itself whether it will take part in any given confrontation will bring too much disunity. Fealty is the most viable option given the threat of Stonebreaker, of the Queen and of the desert itself."

"You would have us swear fealty to you, then?" asked the Brimclosets representative, Bittergem.

"No," said Emerin, taking an additional step forward to put herself in front of Gethro. "I would have you swear fealty to the town itself and to the union it represents, not to any one noble. So I would have my town swear its own oath to protect you. What say you?"

"I say aye," said Toolbridges, who bent to one knee on the sandy dolomite. "Your town has saved me and mine in the past and you have our trust."

"You will promise this, in word and in stone?" demanded Cuphammer. "That we will be as equals?"

"Not as equals," said Gethro, stepping forward again to put himself level with Eremin, "but that all will benefit. That is the best offer you will get, and a better offer than Stonebreaker or the Queen will give you. As representative, though, you will have voice to plead your sietch's needs in the greater body."

"We swear this both in the stone of a tablet and in the stone of foundations," said Khain, who had been studying the gear-shaped rock. "This place would make a fine site for a watchtower, both to keep guard over the sands and to commemorate the occasion. I would myself insist that its operation remain in the hands of the sietches, not the town. If they trust us for protection, we must trust them for warning."

This offer seemed enough to placate Bittergem, who knelt and swore fealty also. Seeing the other two sietch leaders consent and her own objections answers, Cuphammer's oath completed the three. Karana carved into a stone tablet the oaths of the three sietches, as well as the oath of Emerin (and Gethro, who insisted on a noble oath being present), and above it she devised a flag. Carving with prodigious skill she detailed three titans to represent the sietches who swore fealty, the six-spoked gear of Olonakil, and upon each spoke the sign of one of the gods, in honour of the six shrines of the leading town.

"Not a bad piece of stonework," commented Toolbridges, leaning on his crutch. "What do you call it, though?"

Karana traced a finger around the gear, stopping at each of the little signs on the spokes, wherein she had detailed a tiny abbey.

"I call it Olonkulet, master Toolbridges. Gearabbey."

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Today's belated update and unrelated plug (<http://iituem.blogspot.com/2009/07/bringing-knife-to-fist-fight.html>) is brought to you by Writer's Block! The lesson here being, just keep writing through it, because no amount of delay is going to help.

The good news is, we can *finally* start referring to the gods-damned town by NAME!

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Aldaris** on **July 11, 2009, 11:26:32 am**

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There was much rejoice. Yaaaaaaaay.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Enzo** on **July 13, 2009, 04:09:59 pm**

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Tension is building. I fell a bit behind, but as usual caught back up in a single sitting and I'm engrossed as ever. Good stuff. I'm looking forward to the inevitable Ragna vs Stonebreaker matchup, as both are card-carrying badasses.

Also, I was poking around the legends for a world I genned and I found this (<http://i688.photobucket.com/albums/vv245/lookoutforninjas/Godfath.jpg>), which made me think of Olonkulet. Turns out alternate reality Fath is the *god* of mechanics...

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **July 13, 2009, 08:18:08 pm**

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i love the update! nice showing how the people slowly begin to get together to fight off the attacks, and how the town gets its name! i like the idea of an odd shaped mountain being the source of the cities name, in honor of the fact the treaty is signed on its slopes



Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **July 14, 2009, 06:54:57 pm**

*11th Haematite, 354*

The Gibdan wagons pulled into the covered marketplace of the gaudy Nishan chapel, human traders working at unloading their wares. Emerin noticed a few fresh faces, the absence of some of the familiar guards, and signs of wear and tear on wagon, beast and merchant alike. Ibon approached her and clasped hands.

"It is good to see you are still alive, my friend," the Guild's representative said. "Others on my route have not been so fortunate."

"Trouble with raiders?" Emerin asked, glancing at the torn canvas on the wagons and the embittered expressions of its guards. Ibon made a dismissive gesture.

"Raiders we can deal with. Traitors have brought us this difficulty. Are you familiar with the dwarf Stonebreaker?"

"We have suffered at his hand, yes. He betrayed your people and attacked you?"

"Rather the opposite," Ibon conceded, looking aside for a moment. "My guild has factions within it, merchants of greater and lesser power. One of higher station than I dealt with Stonebreaker, supplying him. It was profitable for a long time, until that merchant felt it was more profitable to cheat the General. Now he is striking out at any and all Gibdan traders, making an example to the Guild. He recently dug out a new sietch, Temptcrafted, to strike at our caravans on both possible routes. Soon we may have to stop trading altogether if we cannot get better protection or beg passage from this dwarf."

"How will you manage?" Emerin asked.

"We won't," chuckled Ibon mirthlessly. "Yet we may last a little longer with your help. Let us work out some matters of trade, my friend. We will travel lighter across the desert without this heavy lumber, and the gemmed trinkets you produce here are light and simple to conceal."

"Agreed, Ibon. Why don't we go over the wood you've brought..."

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Petra** on **July 15, 2009, 10:35:38 am**

Petra:

In camp, by fire light, and under the guise of making verse sat Petra against a boulder, writing. She checks constantly if she's being watched.

From the Journal of Petra

*We attacked a caravan today. Stonebreaker's orders. I killed two guards and the leader ordered the elves rounded up and killed. I don't know why we're all of a sudden attacking caravans like mad, but here I am in the middle of it. Just like that sietch... Holddeep, was it? Slaughter, naturally. Under orders: rope and trees. Elves love trees, don't they? Figured the sergeant. Dunno his name. Don't care. Tie 'em to the trees said the sargeant. Then take the nails stolen from the caravan and drive 'em through their bodies. We left them to die. Stole everything from the caravan though. Hauling it is another story.*

*Some verse: to justify the unnaturally curious around here.*

*Life's a backbreaker, stoney and hard  
A barrel of ale and a cart of gold  
Are comforts sitting deep in the hold  
Gigin's malice steals the horde  
Scatters the treasure to the eight winds  
For scavengers and parasites alike  
Dressed in shiney steel and holding sharp swords  
With spears and crossbows and shields and armor  
Pounce upon Gigin's stolen treasures  
Fighting amoung the rats and gnats and flies  
For a gold piece landed in the lonely desert.  
Amoung Gigin's horde a hatred arise  
An implosion of hatred and ambitions turn sour  
Can a culture commit self-suicide?*

Then Petra looked about again and slid the journal into her pack, amoung some spider silk she was hauling back to Temptcrafted. That night her dreams were back in the fields of blood. Vaguely she hear "Armok! Armok! Armok!" Though when she woke the words were ringing in her ears.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **July 15, 2009, 03:06:50 pm**

What's Loksvig been up to?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Aldaris** on **July 15, 2009, 03:35:17 pm**

Is it okay if I ask for another dwarf? Mincewind's good for the occasional comedic relief, but she's hard to write anything solid for.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **July 16, 2009, 07:12:31 am**

Captain Broose stood in a relaxed parade stance as the General perused the latest reports from Temptcrafted. He briefly considered how much Stonebreaker looked like a coiled snake most of the time, shoulders perpetually set like he could strike at any moment, holding back the rage with a continual air of focused discipline.

"...Crucified?" the General asked, raising an eyebrow but not looking up from the report.

"Yes, sir," Broose replied. "Brickbeard got a bit carried away, sir. Not fond of elves, sir."

"Well, who is?" Stonebreaker muttered. "We don't need a war with the elves, though. Have him disciplined."

"Already done, sir." Stonebreaker nodded curtly and continued reviewing the report. He finished reading and placed the slate on his desk, picking up another one and holding it out to Broose, who took it and glanced over the contents.

"Fortress structural work finishes today," the General said. "The new troops from Holddeep arrive in the morning. We are going to need

space for them." He studied Broose's expression. Broose for his part endeavoured to keep it as neutral as possible. He drew in a breath.

"We have sixty-six workers surplus to requirements, sir. About a fifth are dwarves."

"I thought the workforce had a higher dwarven composition than that," commented Stonebreaker casually. Broose set his jaw, then deliberately relaxed it.

"A number of the dwarves are salvageable, sir. It would be a better use of our resources to employ them in dealing with the issue at hand and so bind them closer to us." The General appeared to consider this, then nodded his assent.

"Very well, then. Execute the order. Sixty-six, you say?"

"Yes, sir." Stonebreaker nodded and Broose took this as dismissal. He turned to leave when the General spoke with sudden frankness, casting away the polite facade and asking intently;

"Do you have any problems with genocide, Captain?"

Broose did not look back, but answered in a level voice as he left.

"I'm a soldier, sir. I have my orders."

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Aldaris** on **July 16, 2009, 09:35:51 am**

Isn't it technically speciecide? I mean, elves and dwarves are different species, races are more like mountain dwarfs of the west and the other mountain dwarves from the east.  
Still, interesting where this is going.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **July 16, 2009, 11:14:13 am**

Quote from: Iituem on July 16, 2009, 07:12:31 am  
"Very well, then. Execute the order. Sixty-six, you say?"  
Quote from: Iituem on July 16, 2009, 07:12:31 am  
"Execute the order. Sixty-six, you say?"  
Quote from: Iituem on July 16, 2009, 07:12:31 am  
"order. Sixty-six?"  
Quote from: Iituem on July 16, 2009, 07:12:31 am  
order Sixty-six

Wow, so many unsubtle nods to Star wars. XD

I really like how the towns shaping up. All the characters have a lot of personality as well. Great job.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **July 18, 2009, 05:10:17 pm**

*11th Haematite, 354*

"So, three-day voting fest, I understand?" said Gethro, stepping out of an alleyway as Emerin walked past.

"Gaargh!"

"The mayoral elections, that is. Starting this morning, yes?" Gethro seamlessly began pacing alongside the Lady Mayor, whose step remained unbroken despite the shock.

"Um, yes," said Emerin, trying to regain her composture. "Where exactly did you come from?"

"Little trick your resident troubadour taught me. Anyhow, I wanted you to know that you have my utmost support. Everyone will be voting behind you."

"Er, thank you?"

"Yup, absolutely everyone. For years, I reckon. Especially now that you have nobility oversight on your actions." Emerin frowned, then forced a smile.

"What does that mean, exactly?"

"Well, we can't just have the Mayor running around unchecked, can we? Who knows what an unscrupulous sort could embezzle or otherwise get away with, yes? Not that *anyone* would accuse you of such, Lady Mayor." Gethro's smile was like oil. Thick castor oil being forced down Emerin's throat, at that.

"Of... course." Emerin's own smile went limp at the prospect. "There's nothing I value more than oversight. Yes-siree. Looking forward to many more years in this thangle- rewarding job, with its miser- acceptable pay limits. Yes. Very."

"Not at all worried about the shadow horse in the offing, then?"

"Shadow horse?" Emerin's haunted eyes lit up like a rat finally seeing the light at the end of the maze. There was the possibility the light had a moustrap, but there was also the possibility the light had cheese. "Someone else is actually running?"

"Well, we've been keeping it quiet," Gethro said off-handedly, "but I understand Master Urnriddled would like to have a greater hand in government. I believe the death of his brother rekindled his interest in politics, and would certainly give him a lead in the vote. Popular support and so on. A good thing I have your back, yes?"

"Oh... absolutely." The cogs in Emerin's mind started whirring into motion. She had an out. After three long years, she finally had an out... Gethro patted her on the back.

"Of course, we both know that I'm just a corrupt aristocrat, right?" He winked. "So if, say, my apartments and office happened to be finished by the time the votes were ready to be tallied, I would have no reason to keep your support, would I?"

"Oh, no! No, quite- I mean, I wouldn't ever accuse you of such, Geth- dungeon master! Quite certainly not. Though I do believe Urnriddled would be far more susceptible to such pressures, if that were the case."

"Perhaps so. Do enjoy your day, Lady Mayor." Gethro smiled and turned into another alleyway, leaving Emerin pacing on, lost in thought.

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Today's delayed post excuse is brought to you by A Biker Wedding! Acquaintance from the biking club got married, had about 120 motorbikes come and convoy the wedding car to the hall where they got married. That was a sight to remember.

This (<http://iituem.blogspot.com/2009/07/fourth-line.html>) has nothing to do with that, but you should read it anyway because it has sadly taken a slight updating preference to Olonkulet. I only have so much time to write, and the story with adverts and the potential for eventual revenue sadly has to take preference. (But I'm still updating OK, damn it! I made a promise!)

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **July 19, 2009, 06:41:58 pm**

hmmm very good :D

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **July 21, 2009, 11:48:50 am**

Gethro dropped, ducked and rolled as he entered his office, hooded cloak flapping in the air as he dodged the spinning slate disc that scythed out of the wall as he entered.

"Assassins!" he shouted, drawing himself up against the wall in fear. Surely the Mayor has not been *that* intimidated? He grabbed one of the nearby building blocks, wielding it ready to strike down the dwarf entering through the door, then hesitated when he saw Loksvig and Fath enter. Would she really have sent her own lover to finish the job?

"Where?" asked Loksvig, looking around the bare, half-finished office. Fath peered through his spectacles, trying to see black-robed dwarves hidden in the shadows. Gethro gestured to the slate plate, still half-stuck out of the wall.

"So where are they?" Fath asked, apparently not noticing the disc.

"What- Can you see it? It's right there!"

"Oh, ye noticed!" cried Fath happily. "How do ye like it?"

"Like- It tried to kill me, you maddwarf!"

"What?" asked Fath, looking at the device as if it were the most innocent object in the world. "Don' be silly, that's ye daily organiser." Gethro stared at him, slack-jawed, as the engineer helpfully spun the disc around and pointed to little scribbles etched into the slate.

"See here? There's ye two o'clock with us, and if ye just revolve it around a bit ye can see ye four o'clock meeting with Danielle. She's got one of these too, y'know."

"Really?" asked the dungeon master, for once completely out of his element.

"Much smaller," added Loksvig helpfully. "She insisted you would need a bigger one, since you have a much fuller schedule."

"It's got iron blades on the side!"

"Well, of course we had to rim it. You've got to keep replacing the slate eventually, and it's easier to switch the slates out on an iron frame than it is to replace the whole disc."

"If this is supposed to be some sort of organiser," Gethro asked suspiciously, "why did it spring on me like that the moment I entered? I'm pretty sure I felt a touch plate under that."

"Danielle again," Fath supplied. "We put a pressure plate on her desk so she could just push it and the disc would spring out. Thought you might appreciate the same touch. Of course, with it being bigger, it needed a bit more weight to spring it."

Gethro stared at them both blankly.

*Loksvig's Work Notes*  
*13th Haematite 354*

Installed spinning trap disc at office entrance for dungeon master. Well, we're supposed to keep the nobles safe, right?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **July 21, 2009, 12:02:07 pm**

lol i guess so

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Keldor** on **July 21, 2009, 04:56:51 pm**

Journal of Keldor:

14th Hematite, 354:

I heard that our beloved Dungeon Master was nearly killed today by his own mechanical daily organizer. It just goes to show how these cursed mechanisms can make even something as benign as paperwork into a deadly weapon. Note to self: decline any administrative positions. Too dangerous. I still can't believe I forgot my trap-probing stick back in my room. I guess I'll just have to make sure someone else walks up front of me for the rest of the day.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **July 22, 2009, 02:01:36 am**

nice update. innocent utility for the noble, or devious death trap? bwahah!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **July 23, 2009, 06:45:13 am**

*15th Haematite, 354*

Emerin sat on a small stone bench in the Giginite compound, staring at the bleached and polished skulls arranged like pebbles in a rock garden around the central statue. Beyond the compound gates, the bustle and activity of the town went on, but here there was a brief element of calm. She idly watched the new blacksmith Keldor hustling along the streets near the compound, shoving a rather harrassed

Fora in front of him and complaining about traps. She shook her head and returned to staring glumly at the skulls.

"Congratulations," said a voice nearby. She heard Gehtro sit down on the bench beside her.

"So, I guess your support didn't mean that much after all," Emerin muttered. "Urnriddled didn't make it."

"Ah, yes. I may have lied about that."

"You didn't support Urnriddled, then? I thought your new apartment would've been suitably convincing."

"It is very nice. Very... *organised*. No, I meant I may have abotu Urnriddled even being in the offing. When I lie, I like to go the whole hog." Emerin gave him a look of unconcealed hostility.

"So you just left me stuck in this job, then?"

"Rather more than that. I've been pushing for your re-election all week. Ragna was up as the alternative, and she really could have won the spot. Danielle, too."

"Why?" emerin demanded, bunching her fists. "I was nearly out!"

"Unfortunately for you, Emerin Claspfocus, your wants are relatively unimportant compared to the needs of Olonkulet. As are mine. You're staying in this job because even though you may not want it, you're *good* at it and that's more important to the survival of these people. Ragna's inspirational, but she's not an administrator. Danielle's got a keen mind and could organise the place well enough, but she lacks charisma. Each of them are best suited to their places in the order, but you are best suited to your position as Mayor. Humility, Emerin."

"What, 'know my place'? Fancy sentiment coming from one of the nobility."

"Yes, know your place, but not quite as you think. Humility isn't some way to keep people beneath you. It's about awareness of the self, and the greater society one is part of, and of knowing where one best fits in that society. Because of your colorful history - and I *have* asked around about that - you are best suited for this position. Because of Ragna's and Danielle's pasts, they are best suited for theirs. Similarly, I play my role because it is what I was trained for. A true noble, as any true dwarf in a position of power, must embrace humility or else they are a danger to themselves and the order they are bound to serve." Gethro patted Emerin on the shoulder.

"Somethign to think about during your next term, Lady Mayor."

He stood up and left, and Emerin watched him go. She returned to gazing at the Giginite skulls, a frown firmly creasing her brow.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Keldor** on **July 23, 2009, 11:04:03 pm**

Journal of Keldor:

15th Haematite, 354:

I've taken to following Fora around, since she goes outside to farm, same as I have to to get to the forges. Haven't heard of any trap-related deaths yet, so I guess we've been lucky so far.

I had a strange thought the other day. For some reason, we use firecaps as our currency, but there's a problem with this. Firecaps don't stand up particularly well to being handled heavily, leading to our money literally turning into brown mush over the course of a few weeks. But what if our firecaps were made of metal? A properly mixed rose gold alloy should take on the reddish color of firecaps nicely, and would wear much better. I've been setting aside the nicest looking firecaps to make casts out of, and I plan to make some rose gold firecaps to show Danielle, who seems to be in charge of currency here.

((Who was the dwarf that makes the rock cakes? I would have loved to make a joke about pulling them aside to avoid the manufacture of any scone-fall traps...))

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **July 23, 2009, 11:22:27 pm**

Quote from: Keldor on July 23, 2009, 11:04:03 pm  
((Who was the dwarf that makes the rock cakes? I would have loved to make a joke about pulling them aside to avoid the manufacture of any scone-fall traps...))

That's Mincewind. Heh heh, scone-fall traps.

*Emerin's Log*

All around me are people who have my best political interests at heart. What kind of twisted place is this where everybody's trying to keep me mayor instead of trying to steal my job? Since when was the reason that I'm good at the job any reason at all to avoid seeking my office? Where's the deadly intrigue of the King's Court, the bribery and corruption, the quid pro quo for political office and favors, or politics, as I think that's all described? I've seen more magnanimity and goodwill out of these hardy criminals and refugees than I think is reasonably capable for any being, be he dwarf, elf, or man. This is a truly strange place. Maybe there's something in the booze again, or there always has been.

*Another entry*

I had that dream again. It was the same building, a tower, but I saw more of it this time. A brilliantly lit tower that bounced the sun's ray off of polished metal surfaces, and then a crumbling tower that held a broken skeleton of machinery.

This is starting to worry me, but I don't know who I could go to. I've never been particularly religious. Being a thief makes that difficult, almost out of principle, if not out of pragmatism.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **July 24, 2009, 09:08:07 am**

Greetings from Siberia! Ive had a devil of a time getting internet, and it cost a fuckton, but i got on quickly to read. Great storytelling as always!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **July 24, 2009, 10:45:20 am**

It's kind of weird knowing the final result, but not knowing what happens in the middle. I think a good analogy would be that Olonkulet is my deformed bastard baby, but Iituem was the loving foster who somehow managed to turn it into something more. Actually, that's a pretty shit analogy.



*Khain's Journal*  
*20th Haematite, 354*

*We were inspecting the new artefact when the call came. The mysterious infestation known as the 'Breed of Sewers' cleared from an afflicted dwarf's head a few days ago, leaving a memory gap and a brand new tetrahedrite door in its place. Brilliant crafts dwarfship depicting a scene from history (a dwarf bred in true dwarven society striking down his brother, abducted at birth by goblins and raised in their evil ways), but nothing especially particular about it beyond that. We had it brought down to Gearpoint to take a look at. That's when we heard the horn.*

Khain looked up suddenly as the clarion call sounded from the distant dunes.

"Brimclosets," he said, judging the distance and direction of the horn. Around the half-finished watchtower, dwarves dropped their tools and blocks and reached for weapons and shields instead. A second horn blew nearby in a series of blasts to signal the sietch militias to action, as well as to signify which sietch was under attack. In less than a minute, a well-rehearsed squadron was ready and began marching across the sands to Brimclosets' aid.

Combat was already underway when Khain's forces arrived. Some of the other sietch militiadwarves had made it to Brimclosets first and trapped Stonebreaker's raiders between their position behind a tall dune and the embankments at the sietch, bolts being fired from both sides at the raider marksdwarves as the axedwarves rallied and came at the defenders toe to toe. Khain held back for half a minute watching the battle take place, then brought his forces in once the last militia reinforcement arrived. The raiders balked at the sight of the suddenly doubled forces and began to fight a retreat away from the sietch, making for an opening in the shrinking circle of defenders. The raiders withdrew and formed a line, halting their boltfire. With the combined Gearan militia equal to them in number, Khain ordered the dwarves to form an equal line, ready to meet them in an advance.

The two forced waited, bows drawn and axes readied.

The leader of the raiders raised a hand and walked forward slowly, a heavy hammer in her other. Khain looked at his troops, then cautiously did the same with his spear in his good hand. The two met on the sands between the two forces. The raider leader saluted.

"Sergeant Petra, of General Stonebreaker's army," she said. Khain nodded stiffly in response.

"Corporal Khain, Olonkulet. Will you surrender?" Petra shook her head.

"No. We do not wish a battle here, though. Nor do you, the cost would be great even in victory." Khain nodded cautiously.

"We are ready to defend our territory," he warned. "We have just proved, we can summon this force at little notice."

"We can summon one ten times this size," Petra returned, though it was neither threat nor brag. "But we have other enemies. We do not need more." She studied Khain's eyes for a moment and he hers. They both nodded slightly.

"There is nothing of interest to the General here," Petra said, drawing herself up. "We can raid elsewhere."

"That would be best," Khain agreed. He bowed his head slightly and Petra gave another salute. She turned to leave, then paused and looked back.

"Do you know," she asked, "a pair of dwarves named Jora and Datan by any chance?"

"Aye. They have been kinsdwarves-at-arms in the past."

"Would you convey a message to them from me?"

"Perhaps," Khain said evenly, eyeing the raiders.

"Tell them," Petra began, then pursed her lips and frowned. "Tell them I understand why. That he needed me to be strong enough, for when the time came. Tell them that Stonebreaker doesn't need slaves any more." She paused, as if to add more, then turned and retreated to her forces. Khain stood where he was, watching the raiders as they cautiously made their retreat.

this definatly feels like an important part of the fort's history right here. the first time that the small villages are working together to stop stonebreaker's attacks

(also, is the watch tower gonna be round shaped, or possibly gear shaped? just curious...)

Quote from: Iituem on July 25, 2009, 05:23:09 pm

"Do you know," she asked, "a pair of dwarves named Petra and Datan by any chance?"

Whoop, there goes my continuity detector again. You must mean Jora and Datan, since, you know, Petra is the one talking.

The tower of Olonkulet isn't on the premises of our dwarves' outpost, is it? I got the impression that it was not.

Watch out for a dwarf called Mogror.

*15th Malachite, 354*

*"Come one, come all, to the Dog House!"*

A carnival atmosphere had descended upon the town of Olonkulet with the opening of Urgash Bonefetish's long-awaited 'Dog House', a massive dog farm and slaughterhouse perched at the southeasternmost corner of the town walls. Dwarves of all ages milled around the compound and the nearby streets, holding freshly cooked hotdogs (no cat, guaranteed!) with prickly pear relish and redbulb flour baps.

The troubadour sang songs and performed sleight-of-hand tricks for spare firecaps, and Kel Ragebrew (finally recovered from his multiple beatings) had set up a concessional stall to sell drinks. Fora wandered over to him with a pair of hotdogs, passing him one and picking up a small mug of beer.

"I've got to say, I'm impressed with the food," she commented, leaning on the stall and sipping her beer. "Urgash breeds some good dog."

"Yeah, Mincewind made those," Kel pointed out. Fora sprayed beer in all directions.

"And he's actually selling them?!"

"Oh, they're fine, I've had three. Apparently he told the girl she was mixing cement when he gave her the sausagemeat."

"How does that even-" Kel raised a hand.

"Don't question it, just eat it." He glanced backward at the general workshops. A few construction workers were setting blocks on the upper level at a relaxed pace, having brought some mugs and houndburgers up for the day. "Sort of slowing the work on my still, but it'll do." He sold a mug of glow wine to a passerby and looked over at the Dog House compound. Many children were happily petting the dogs in the cages or on their restraints, while other children were admiring the wide array of deadly tools/weaponry available in the slaughterhouse. Urgash himself was there in a bright purple coat and top hat, dyed purple with royal moss, demonstrating the sausage machine in action.

"And that's how we turn puppies into meals, kids! But remember, never waste the parts, so next we'll take a tour around the tannery where you can learn the sixteen different uses for urine and dog muck. First, though, who wants *candied tripe*?" A chorus of cheers came from the children as Urgash passed around a platter of the strange, anonymous cuts of wobbly meat. Kel shook his head and turned to address a new customer.

"Danielle!" he greeted, pouring out a fresh mug of glow wine. "Care for a drink? Only a firecap."

"Two drinks," Danielle said, "because I actually know what the value of that is per mug." Kel grumbled and poured her a second mug. She quaffed some and put it down.

"I'm surprised it's really happening," Fora commented. "I didn't think Emerin was going to let up on the whole private enterprise thing."

"I gather the Nishans were putting a lot of pressure on her about it," said Danielle, then chuckled. "Gethro was right against it, which probably tipped the scales."

"Not fond of him, then?" Kel asked.

"Not especially, no," came a voice from his right. He turned to see Emerin leaning on the stall with a plate of houndburgers. She tossed a couple of firecaps on the table. "Give me some paint stripper, aye?"

"Aye, boss," said Kel, taking a copper canister from under the table. He poured Emerin a mug of the absurdly potent drink made from turpens and she sipped at it gingerly, wrinkling her nose.

"By Deler's left testicle, that's strong," she coughed. "Have they done the display yet?"

"Not yet," said Fora, shaking her head. She pointed to the five marksdwarves on the town wall above the compound, fiddling with their bows, then looked at Danielle. "Surprised you're not up there with him doing the tour." Danielle shuddered.

"We have an arrangement. He doesn't disturb me when I'm filing, I don't disturb him when he's with the dogs. I have a spinning blade trap organiser in my office for a reason, you know."

"Don't you work all the time?" Emerin asked, raising an eyebrow.

"And he breeds dogs all the time, it's a perfect relationship," Danielle said drily. "We never see each other long enough to get irritated by the other and meet up every couple of days for a drink or a romantic meal. Why, how often do you see your beau?"

"Not as often as I would like," Emerin admitted, "though I suppose it's different for different people. I guess I'd rather we *weren't* working all the time."

"Then maybe you ought to make time. Ah, the marksquad looks like it's about ready. I'll go join Urgash." Danielle set her mug down and walked over toward the compound, where Urgash was just finishing the tour with a demonstration of proper skinning technique. Fora put her mug down as well.

"I'm going to go find some more hotdogs. Back in a bit, Kel." She wandered off into the crowd. Seeing the stall relatively unoccupied, Emerin leaned in toward Kel.

"Say," she asked, "I'm told you might be able to hook me up with something, uh, special? In the drinks variety."

"Not sure what you mean, *Mayor*," Kel said neutrally. Emerin pursed her lips.

"I've been having... dreams. Odd dreams. I know you were responsible for something like that happening to people, and I reckon you must've figured out a way to stop it, because you're not gibbering." Kel stiffened.

"There is an... antidote, yes. I don't know if it will just work on ordinary dreams, though."

"Yes, well, I'm willing to try anything right now. Slip some by my apartment this evening, I'll see to it your brewery gets a head forward in the work schedules."

Kel said nothing, but Emerin detected a microscopic inclination of his head. She leant against the stall and picked up a houndburger, looking up at the marksdwarves on the wall. The new marksdwarf corporal raised his bow in sync with the others, shouted a command to the other marksdwarves and as one they fired. Five bolts arched through the air, streaming brightly coloured tassels from the ends. The crowd cheered as they passed over the town and onto the mountainside below. Somewhere in the distance, a goat bleated in panic.

Nobody minded.

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Redhades** on **July 28, 2009, 10:50:04 pm**

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This post is all manners of dwarfness. :D

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Bloogonis** on **July 30, 2009, 03:48:44 pm**

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Yay Party! also poor goat, or more accurately yay goat burgers too!

***Khain's Journal,***  
*19th Malachite, 354*

News came in from Armdread today, along with a line of refugees. They're settled down here at Gearpoint; Olonkulet's already stretched for room. Apparently that girl sergeant hit them, and hard, but since Armdread refused to be part of the coalition we can't really call it an act of war. There are a lot of pleas for a return force sent out, though; dead relatives to bury and such. We're mounting a force now.

*20th Malachite, 354*

Stonebreaker's lot are gone, but we didn't luck out just yet. Looks like there were plenty of ordinary goblin raiders in the region as well; they settled in to scavenge anything left the troops didn't take. I think I saw some of them gnawing on bones when scouting; I can only hope dog bones.

*Evening*

Drove out the goblins with no casualties; couple of broken arms, but they'll heal. The dead are mostly still here, no thanks to the greenskins. We're working on taking them back to Gearpoint for burial, and sifting through the wreckage for anything that will survive the trip.

*22nd Malachite, 354*

*theyre back*

*Evening*

Thirty of the bleeding gobbers came at us while we were having breakfast! Bloody raiders we kicked out must've gotten friends. We were holed up in the sietch behind every door and piece of broken furniture we could make a barricade out of and trying to hold off a bloody swarm. Lost three good dwarves to that rush, but I'll be damned if we didn't take down five gobbers for each of them.

We're going to have to abandon this post; they're bound to be back for another rush. Armdread is lost, we'll have to get the dead and move back to the watchtower.

***Danielle's Inventory,***  
*15th Galena, 354*

Excavation of the eastern mountain's edge has begun in earnest. With the population increase from the Holddeep immigrants, we are trying desperately to make accomodation for everyone, but a major stone requirement has risen with the demand. There is a lot of talk about just carving out burrows, a matter I am putting my foot down on. I was one of the founders of this damned town, and I'm damned well not going to see the mountain gutted like a goblin for our convenience!

There's a booze shortage right now; I'm getting very crabby. That damned charlatan Ragebrew is making a mint off it, being one of three half-way competent brewers in the town and Urgash tied up in the dog farm.

*5th Limestone, 354*

Astesh, one of the jewellers, has gone a bit religious. That is to say, she kicked a mason in the head, stone his workstation and started off on another of those damned divine projects. The great irony? She can't complete it because she doesn't have any cut gemstones. Well, she can damned well wait until Karana gets some time to cut some!

Tried discussing this to Urgash, but as usual he's tied up with a new litter of puppies. I guess I shouldn't complain too much; I heard what happened to his ex-wife. It's been days since I had a stiff shot of slatterjack. I swear, I'm going to try and ferment puppies if it'll get me a drink.

*6th Limestone, 354*

It didn't.

*8th Limestone, 354*

A messenger arrived from Meadowfort; apparently Stonebreaker is marching an army there. They're requesting support. We don't have an army to spare, but Gethro put a lot of pressure on Emerin to intervene during the town council meeting today, and Ragna volunteered to lead a squad anyway. Why do I get the feeling that once again we're going to have our competent fighters abandon us in favour of a few green marksdwarves and a crippled speardwarf hiding in his watchtower?

*Gods damn it, I need a drink!*

-----

Fast forwarding a bit today. Not much happened in the summer, and I would rather get to the stuff that happened in the fort (and eventually back to a point where I can play the damned game again!) rather than stuff beyond it. As always, Olonkulet is brought to you by a less than subtle plug (<http://iituem.blogspot.com>).

Late in responding: I really liked the dog farm carnival! And booze shortage. And plug.

lol poor puppy

Ragna lowered the spyglass and passed it along the line to Jora. The younger swordsdwarf inspected it critically.

"Fancy. How much did this cost you?"

"Arm and leg," volunteered Stug, adding with a cackle; "Promised glassblow keep arm and leg if give." He caught Ragna's look and grumbled. "Hundred firecap. Happy? Is joke, ha ha."

"Hah hah," echoed Datan tonelessly, taking the spyglass and peering over the hill. The army was busy burning the farmlands around the fort and harvesting as much as possible for wood, repeating the same tactic as in the Holddeep siege. Meadowfort was similarly constructed to Holddeep, but it had the added advantage of a moat. Based on the premise that there is no such word as 'overengineered' in the dwarven dictionary, the moat was further filled with sharp wooden stakes and a population of deadly war carp were kept in the water. According to the messenger, this was not the only surprise the moat had in store.

"So, no going through the sewers this time?" Jora asked.

"It was a reservoir, and no," said Datan, handing the spyglass back to Ragna. "It looks like we'll have to risk getting in with the password and hope the army doesn't riddle us with arrows as we go."

"Seem pointless," Stug observed. "Army twenty, thirty to one odds. Not as if 'Morul'. You think we four make difference?"

"No," said Ragna. "If Meadowfort stands or falls, that will be up to her own defences. The messenger said someone of importance to the Queen was trapped in the fort, though, and we're to rescue them."

"Not exactly the Queen's loyal subjects, are we, though?" Jora pointed out.

"Yeah, but when she finds out we've basically formed a small nation it'd be nice to have a bit of political capital on our side, wouldn't you say?" said Datan. Jora shrugged.

"So... nothing for it but to run?" she asked, shouldering a broad iron shield. Ragna nodded. "After you, then, captain."

*"Rosebud! **Rosebud!**"*

Corporal Hiltstaffed leant over the parapet, perplexed at the sight of the four dwarves running toward the drawbridge, arrows and bolts hailing at them from literally all sides (on account of some of the more overzealous defenders of Meadowfort). Sergeant Pickreadied pulled him back behind the safety of the battlements as a stray arrow clattered off the wall nearby.

"So do you reckon we ought to let them in?" Hiltstaffed asked.

"Do you want to get impaled on a spear?" Pickreadied countered.

"Right, only, they're saying the right password. Shouting it, even."

"Probably a trap. No reason to leave our nice, cosy spot and brave enemy fire for a bunch of morons who couldn't get into the gate in time."

*"For Gigin's sake, let us in or I'll grind your feet into sausage!"*

"Certainly not with that attitude," the sergeant added, patting his jacket down for something to smoke. He glanced up at the figure in the doorway and saluted half-heartedly.

"Let them in," the figure commanded.

"Um, is that really-" the corporal began, but the sergeant raised a hand and nodded to him wearily.

"Go on," sighed Pickreadied. "I guess we risk our necks after all."

The four skirmishers from Olonkulet huddled together under the rudimentary tortoiseshell, although four shields was pushing it even for dwarves. Arrows continued to clatter off the sides.

"Brilliant plan," commented Stug. "Really. Worthy of prize, yes? Maybe we get big ribbon on chest later."

"And an arrow to pin it on with," muttered Jora. "They're not opening the gate, captain!" The arrows stopped.

"Well, there's some luck," Jora said brightly.

Up ahead, they could hear the heavy footfalls of soldiers racing toward them.

"Bugger this," growled Datan. "Let's just-"

A heavy creaking behind them signalled the slow fall of the drawbridge. Holding position until it had completely fallen, they ran under cover of shields across the thick wooden platform, ducking under the archway as the counterweights dropped and the drawbridge snapped back into place, flinging a handful of opportunistic invaders into the air. One had the particular misfortune of falling into the moat, where the dreaded war carp began tearing him limb from limb.

"What in Gigin's name do you think you're doing?!" yelled an approaching dwarf in captain's uniform. The new arrivals cautiously half-lowered their shields to find a ring of marksdwarves surrounding them.

"We're from a town called Olonkulet," explained Ragna, standing up from the crouched shield position. "We are here to render assistance."

"Render assistance?" the Meadowfort captain demanded incredulously. "You nearly let them through the bleeding gate! Who did you kill for the password? Lieutenant, drag this sorry lot off to the-"

"That won't be necessary," came a strangely familiar voice from the steps leading to the battlements. "I sent for them."

All eyes turned to the figure looking over the courtyard; Datan, the Elf Liason for the Queen. The captain opened his mouth to protest, then shut it and stormed away fuming.

"Bloody politicals," he muttered before slamming the door to a nearby tavern. Ragna chose to believe this meant the captain was using it as a command centre. In fairness, that was probably true either way. The marksdwarves raised their weapons and returned to their posts on the walls, the Liason beckoning the dwarves of Olonkulet to follow him.

"So you wanted us here to get you out, is that it?" Ragna asked as they ascended the steps.

"About it. Stonebreaker has a rather successful reputation; I should know, I fought alongside him when he helped the Queen take power.



Given that, I have no desire to be sticking around when his troops get here."

"Here now," said Stug brusquely. "Let's go." Datan chuckled and shook his head, gesturing over the battlements. Stonebreaker's troops had formed a ring around the fortress. Siege ladders were already being thrust up against the walls.

"I'm afraid not. Your arrival started the siege off early; to get out now, we'll have to wait for either the attackers to break and abandon their strike, or rather more likely for the city to fall. We ought to be able to make an escape in the confusion." Datan gave a nod to a nearby defender, who blew sharply on a whistle. All around the fortress walls, marksdwarves pulled shutters painted white to conceal them against the stone, releasing caches of thick black oil and pitch onto the surface of the moat below. It was only a matter of time until a torch followed.

A ring of flames swept around Meadowfort, signalling the start of the siege.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Bloogonis** on **August 01, 2009, 11:59:19 pm**

\*Whistles long and loud\*

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **August 02, 2009, 12:54:03 am**

LETS BREAK SOME HEADS!!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **August 02, 2009, 07:42:26 pm**

beautiful....simply beautiful

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Enzo** on **August 04, 2009, 02:04:30 am**

**Yes.** This is going to get epic. Datan and Datan finally meet! And nice to see Urgash is still around, and doing something very dwarfy.

Quote from: Iituem on August 01, 2009, 07:12:54 pm  
"Brilliant plan," commented Stug. "Really. Worthy of prize, yes? Maybe we get big ribbon on chest later."

I know it's been mentioned before, but Stugs lines are a lot funnier if you're subconsciously reading them with a Russian accent.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Community - T/T/S)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **August 06, 2009, 05:08:18 am**

*12th Limestone, 354*

"Pull back to the inner bailey!" yelled Ragna over the Meadowfort captain's corpse. Gesturing with her blade, the defenders gave a few final kicks and thrusts at the handful of surviving goblin troops being pressed before their dwarven masters before abandoning the street and drawing back through the archway of the inner bailey. Jora, Datan the dwarf and Ragna held the front against the attackers, swords and axe cutting through droves of attackers as they made their retreat. Jora spun with flourish, wielding her sabre like an extension of her form as Datan cleaved bodies in twain with mighty strokes of his axe. Ragna took this a step further, weaving in and out of the enemy line with ducks and dodges that seemed to know where the enemy would strike before he did. Even so, the three maintained a retreat against the sheer number of troops pressing through the streets. They held position at the inner bailey's gates until the portcullis came down, then retreated to the safety of the walls around the narrow courtyard.

"Marksdwarves!" Ragna commanded. "Get into position on the walls, we need to turn this place into a murder hole immediately! Trapmaster, activate the floor!" With a low grinding, the dusty tiled floor of the courtyard shifted an inch on unseen rails, then lay still. The defenders made their way around the very edge of the courtyard to the inner building, the Elven Liason and remaining soldiers holding the door open for them. As they passed into the building within, enemy battering rams broke through the portcullis and a stream of captured goblins and dwarves were forced into the courtyard to the greetings of dozens of arrows. As the wave spread across the courtyard, the suddenly unstable tiles tilted on greased axles, dropping bodies into heavy stone meat grinders powered by unseen waterwheels. The troops continued forcing bodies into the breach until the sheer quantity of flesh gummed up the works and provided a bridge for the remaining troops to cross.

[Internet access sporadic atm, none of my pre-written notes. Post will be edited and updated as I get access again.]

[OK on hiatus for one week - RL situation unexpectedly busy, only have time to maintain regular updates on one of my stories, so despite the fact it actually has less readers I had to give Violet Water Beast the priority. Olonkulet will return soon.]

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (1 week hiatus)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **August 16, 2009, 07:54:35 pm**

I found this thing on page three, if you can believe it.

It's been ten days, Iituem. I believe an update, on the story or on what's going on, is appropriate.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (Back!)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **August 24, 2009, 02:22:22 pm**

The liason signalled a retreat for the remainder of the troops into a large, bin-filled room. Ragna, Jora and Datan pressed their backs against the wall by the storehouse doors, Ragna slamming the heavy bar down across them. Jora looked to the outpost liason.

"So what now, elf?" she snapped. The elven Datan smiled wanly.

"Well," he said, "I *thought* this was the north storehouse, but it looks like we've just barred ourselves in the wrong bloody room."

"What's so great about the north storehouse?" the dwarf Datan asked.

"Secret passage through the walls," the elf shrugged. Outside, the heavy creak of metal sounded the troops bursting through the portcullis. "Fat lot of good that'll do us now."

"Check the bins for weapons or shields," Ragna ordered. "Try and get hold of anything we can use in a fight." Datan put his axe through one of the bins; a small hill of millet flushed out.

"Ah, crap. Farming supplies." He ran a hand down his face and through his beard, then readied himself by the door. Somewhere beyond

it, deep screams were coming from above. So much for the marksdwarves, then. "Well," Datan grunted, "I'm not bloody well going to die here."

"You seem pretty sure of yourself," Jora pointed out, readying her sabre. Over by the bins, the elf was rummaging through bins.

"Let's just say I think my appointment with Deler's already been set. What's the bleeding elf doing?"

"Aha!" cried the elven Datan, pulling a single seed from one of the barrels. "Got it!"

"Got what?" Ragna asked, rubbing her wrists. She was starting to get a bit tired from all the killing.

"Our ticket out of here," said the liason with a grin, albeit a humourless one. "All I need to do is debase the sacred teachings and renounce any vestiges of my heritage as an elf." He snorted. "As if joining a bunch of dwarves and living underground didn't already do that." Jora tilted her head.

"Which involves what?" she asked.

"Mud," said the elf. "I need mud, and as much of it as you can get before the soldiers get in. Everyone, kick the mud off your boots into a pile!" Bewildered, the garrison dwarves began scraping mud from their boots as the elf turned to Ragna.

"Captain," he continued, "what I need from you is simple. Blood." Ragna raised a bushy eyebrow. "Goblin blood for preference, but once this gets started any blood will work. Even yours, if you get cut down. Do you have some idea what I'm going to do?" Ragna nodded slowly. Suddenly the door began to shudder with heavy banging from the other side, splinters of wood cracking from the bar.

"Steady," the captain growled. Around the room, the dwarven troops readied their spears and axes, and the elven Datan placed the seed he had found in the clump of soil. A palpable tension hung in the air as the door continued to splinter and crack.

Ragna held herself, back to the wall, sword in hand. She could feel her senses sharpening, a looseness entering her muscles as it always did just before a fight. The heavy breathing of her fellow soldiers across from her, the harsh grunting of the goblins in between the sharp cracks of the ram. The bitter tang of blood in her mouth, the polished grip of the longsword in her fingers, the subtle reverberations of the Force through her feet. Something shifted, and her arm began to move.

The door exploded open and the first goblin charged through, clutching the end of the ram with both hands and raging a terrifying war-cry even as Ragna's blade cut through his throat, reducing it to a wet gargle. Dark crimson shimmered; from the blade, from his neck, from the pool spreading in slow silence across the floor. The moment it hit the dirt, chaos erupted.

Ragna's senses exploded. Instead of the crystal clarity she always felt in a fight, everything sank into confusion. She became aware of herself swinging wildly, hacking at goblins and dwarves with an almost lunatic bloodlust. Somewhere distant from her, she could make out the forms of Jora and Datan in the haze, the blend of elegant swordplay and brutal axedwarfship holding out against the onrush of attackers. Something slashed her arm and her blade cut deep into a dwarf's collarbone, severing his beard and driving a deep gash through his windpipe. His scream seemed sharper than the others, echoing through her skull like a beating mace. She could feel herself sinking away, all senses fading except for one.

Rage. Pure, unadulterated rage. Something was tearing at her, wounding at her. Somewhere above, somewhere in the world of little things, little things were killing one another. She reached up, reached up from the dark, dreamy slumber to see the cause, to look through eyes and hear through ears and taste through lips. She found an opening and began to perceive. At first dull, unfocused, then with rapid clarity. Pain, pain here too. Cuts, gashes in the flesh.

She flicked the dead metal in the creature's hand, sending the annoyance flying across the room. The eyes lingered on the sight for a moment, on the body with the hair upon its face cloven and the flesh beneath it rent, and the ichor seeping from it. Something was wrong here. The blood was burning up, turning into crimson gas and flowing through the room, the body drying and dessicating and burning with fire, and how it hurt! How it hurt *her!* Was this the cause of her pain?

She flicked the dead metal again to maintain her eyes a little longer, sending three more creatures to a similar fate. Once more their blood boiled and flowed through the air, and this time she forced the eyes to watch the path. The blood, the smoke, the living force flowed to a seed, a seed forced into growth unnatural. A thick, bulbous vine pressed against the raised and dead stone, forcing it apart, forcing a hole in the wall on the dwarf-made cavern. There, next to it, a creature stood, eyes red as the boiling blood. The source of the pain, of the unnatural growth. Tormentor. Betrayer.

She moved the figure forward, cutting with the dead metal anything in its path, moving it toward the creature that dared to do this, that dared to tear at her flesh for its gain. Something was holding her back. Many somethings. Dragging the creature down with them. She struggled with the creature, to little avail, but there were other ways. She eased herself out, moving away, moving back into slumber. First, though, she roared.

"Ragna!" Jora yelled as the horde of goblins began piling over the dwarf, frantically slashing at them with her sword, an unexplained madness in her eyes. Jora began advancing toward her, cutting at the goblins to try and get to the captain, but suddenly found her footing askew. She tumbled to her knees as a thunderous tremor surged through the earth beneath her. Grains of mortar shook loose from the ceiling, but the tremor only kept growing. Datan grabbed Jora's shoulder.

"Jora!" he shouted. "We have to get out, it's a bleeding earthquake!" He pointed to the corner of the storeroom. Dried, dessicated bodies of dwarves and goblins alike were strewn across the room, some turned to grey dust, but a vast and strangely ugly-looking green vine had spread across the room, laying its tendrils in them. The vine had forced through the mortar in the wall, breaking open a hall just wide enough for a dwarf to pass through. Draped over a bin close by, an exhausted and haggard elf showed only the faintest glimmer of life.

Jora supposed by the clothes it to be Datan, but this was the only clue. What glamour and youthful beauty the elf had possessed was gone, drained away and replaced by a wrinkled, aged figure with translucent skin and hair, bright blue veins traced clearly through his skin. Jora glanced back; she could not even see the captain any more under the press of greenskins.

"Gods damn it!" she swore, grabbing Datan's arm and running with him to the makeshift exit as the ceiling began to crumble above. She hefted the frail, almost weightless elf onto her shoulder; for all that had been sacrificed, she might as well get the damned payload. The liason opened his eyes and stared at her for a fraction of a second as they passed through the hole; the blue had been leached from his eyes, replaced with a pale pink. He shut them the moment they passed into the sun, cringing at the harsh light.

With a cacophonous roar, the inner bailey of Meadowfort collapsed. Far from a spectacular crumbling, the corner of the building appeared at first to sag, then with the slow inevitability of an avalanche began to slide to the ground. As Jora, Datan and the elf made their escape, a handful of lumps of masonry cartwheeled after them in a final parting shot by the keep. When they had reached a safe enough distance, Jora turned to look back.

Nobody crawling out of the wreckage. No survivors escaping by the skin of their teeth. Just dust, settling.

They turned and began the long trek home.

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And now I'm back in England, where I do have my notes again. I've made my sentiments about holidays known elsewhere on the boards, so I shan't repeat them.

Hopefully, that means we'll be back onto a more regular update schedule again, soon. In the meantime, here's a little sketch to go with the post.



Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (We're Back!)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **August 24, 2009, 04:39:59 pm**

:o

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (We're Back!)**  
Post by: **Duke of Nawn** on **August 28, 2009, 11:14:48 am**

Only one comment on the latest update? I will rectify this!

Ahem.

RAGNA NOOOOOO! Now who will tell Stug stories?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (We're Back!)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **August 28, 2009, 12:31:41 pm**

very nice. it felt like i was there...somewhat

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (We're Back!)**  
Post by: **Keita** on **August 28, 2009, 03:37:37 pm**

THAT WAS AWESOME!

Good story, can't wait for update.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (We're Back!)**  
Post by: **Nirur Torir** on **September 07, 2009, 08:42:31 pm**

More please!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (We're Back!)**  
Post by: **Virroken** on **September 07, 2009, 09:24:01 pm**

Quote from: Nirur Torir on September 07, 2009, 08:42:31 pm

More please!

Seconded.

Lurker-reader here. I'm just dropping by to say this is one of the best stories I've read here so far. Please continue, Itu. It's amazing.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (We're Back!)**  
Post by: **Kel the Oblivious** on **September 08, 2009, 12:31:37 pm**

Yay! More awesome writing for all to enjoy once more!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (We're Back!)**  
Post by: **Enzo** on **September 08, 2009, 02:57:07 pm**

Two weeks :(

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (We're Back!)**  
Post by: **Keita** on **September 10, 2009, 04:56:31 am**

'Tis a sad two weeks

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (We're Back!)**  
Post by: **Aldaris** on **September 12, 2009, 10:41:55 am**

Must.. have.. moar... Olonkulet.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (We're Back!)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **September 12, 2009, 07:42:32 pm**

:(

This blows. The two best stories in Community Games & Stories aren't being updated anymore, or as often as they used to.

I am, of course, referring to Migrursut and Olonkulet.

Please! Come back! Provide us with Dwarf Fortress inspired stories! Continue the arcs of our characters! I mean, for the love of all that's holy, my character's the mayor in this one!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (We're Back!)**  
Post by: **Lord Dullard** on **September 13, 2009, 11:58:52 pm**

I will join in the request for moar Olonkulet. Although I have been absent from internet-land for a long while, I still pop in here occasionally to read this excellent story.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (We're Back!)**  
Post by: **qwertyuiopas** on **September 22, 2009, 08:14:18 pm**

I just read the whole thing. I expected more story. :(

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (We're Back!)**  
Post by: **Petra** on **September 23, 2009, 09:10:11 pm**

Log of Petra, who was not in the charge.

Stonebreak does not need slaves. As the army grows, so does my uncertainty of the course of my being here. Although I am a skilled soldier with a hammer to match, I can only wonder where all this is going. What does Stonebreaker want? Why are we marching across the country taking over towns and leaving ruins?

I can only wonder if this is some sinister plot.

The dreams won't go away. Fields of blood and I... well, I keep hearing the chanting. "Armok. Armok." And it won't go away.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (We're Back!)**  
Post by: **Aldaris** on **September 24, 2009, 09:07:58 am**

Quote from: Petra on September 23, 2009, 09:10:11 pm

Log of Petra, who was not in the charge.

Stonebreak does not need slaves. As the army grows, so does my uncertainty of the course of my being here. Although I am a skilled soldier with a hammer to match, I can only wonder where all this is going. What does Stonebreaker want? Why are we marching across the country taking over towns and leaving ruins?

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Looks like the influence of Blockedlance is increasing...

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (We're Back!)**  
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **September 24, 2009, 09:15:38 am**

Quote from: Aldaris on September 24, 2009, 09:07:58 am

Quote from: Petra on September 23, 2009, 09:10:11 pm

Log of Petra, who was not in the charge.

Stonebreak does not need slaves. As the army grows, so does my uncertainty of the course of my being here. Although I am a skilled soldier with a hammer to match, I can only wonder where all this is going. What does Stonebreaker want? Why are we marching across the country taking over towns and leaving ruins?

I can only wonder if this is some sinister plot.

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Looks like the influence of Blockedlance is increasing...

Kind of appropriate, Mogrор being from Olonkulet in the first place.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (We're Back!)**  
Post by: **Kel the Oblivious** on **October 12, 2009, 11:23:05 pm**

Why has this stopped?! More damnit, MORE!

I will do another little journal entry if this doesn't kick up again, just so it has some new content to read!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (We're Back!)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **October 12, 2009, 11:39:27 pm**

Ituem has been gone since September 9th.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (We're Back!)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **October 13, 2009, 05:48:49 pm**

unfortunately this has gone dead. and this was a good fort/story too :(

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (We're Back!)**  
Post by: **Ituem** on **October 14, 2009, 08:03:04 pm**

Eilam peered over the parapet, frowning at the slight column of dust. He started and immediately began shouting out the alarm. Up ahead in the distance, approaching the town from the east was a thick column of soldiers, eagerly pursuing a handful of desperately fleeing souls.

The first of the figures, a tall and emaciated figure with red eyes and dead, white hair, raced ahead of and apart from his fellows, but not without pursuit. A small contingent of goblins and an axedwarf had broken off from the main column, gaining ground on the runner. One of the goblins, an unarmed smang, managed to grab hold of the runner's arm.

Something flashed in the runner's eyes, an animal snarl twisting the elven features, and the goblin's stomach lurched. By the time it realised what was happening, the elf had already fractured its arms in three places and was several strides back in the lead. The goblin slumped to the ground and writhed as its fellows trampled across its broken form in their chase.

The second and third figures, a swordsdwarf and axedwarf both fleeing with surprising grace for their heavy plate armour, had rather more on their plate. More than ten times their number charged after them, raging and waving their weapons in ill-contained fury. At their rear, a handful of uniformed figures strode purposefully after them, armed with heavy crossbows and grim steel breastplates. Two held back, studying the battlefield.



"We should not be here," one of them muttered. "I feel you made a mistake, Captain."

"Perhaps that is why I am the Captain, and you are the Sergeant," Broose replied. He glanced down at his crossbow. Loaded. Good.

"There is no tactical advantage to bringing this few men this close to such a marginal target," Petra noted. She glanced at the advancing figures, calling the marksdwarves around her to a halt. Only the goblins, bowgoblins and a handful of dwarves were still running. She ran a thumb along the holster of her own bow. "Do you suppose you don't make mistakes in your plans?"

Broose looked away.

"Do you suppose I don't?" he asked, as if something else was on his mind.

"No."

Both swung their crossbows to face one another, each levelled perfectly at the other's head. A moment of shock, then the remainder of the marksdwarves had raised their bows as well. Out of the corner of his eye, Broose counted where the bows were pointing. A third at him, two thirds at Petra. Good enough.

"Join us," he commanded, and around him the marksdwarves shifted so they were facing their kin on the other side, almost as a wall. "There's a place for you here, Petra."

"I already have a place," she replied coldly. "You saw to that."

"Perhaps, but a dwarf can change where she stands."

"Maybe I think a dwarf should pick where she stands and stick to it."

In the distance, bows twanged and unseen combatants cried out. There was a slaughter going on, but for whom? Petra held Broose's gaze, steel for steel, then finally lifted the tip of her crossbow an inch.

"Stonebreaker's going to know everything that happened, you know," she said, carefully taking steps back along with those marksdwarves still loyal to her. "He'll hunt you down like a purring maggot, even if he has to tear down this place to do it."

"Maybe," Broose conceded, "but he'd have gotten to that eventually anyway. For what it's worth, I hope we never meet again, Petra." Petra nodded soberly.

"So do I, Broose," she said. "Because that day, I will kill you."

Eilam cranked back the winch on his crossbow. Most of the squad pursuing the elf had been taken down in the first volley, but Ascubis had already rushed out there with a spear to lend aid. He had done so by displaying as elegantly as possible the intestines of two of the goblins. Just as he drew back his spear to take out a third, Eilam's bolt sailed through the air and caught the goblin neatly through the eye. Ascubis turned to face the parapet and waved a fist.

"Kill stealer!" he yelled.

Eilam laughed, but it was cut shout by a piercing wail from the west.

Ousire wrenched the alarm whistle with all her might, glaring furtively at the heavy iron door to the smithy. Since the disaster those months before, she had forged a barrier herself, but from the plaintive whining sounds the guard dog had already fell foul of the invaders. A sudden cessation and distant crunching sound confirmed it. She planted her back against the wall and picked up an iron, stabbing it into the magma furnace until it burned.

She waited, hoarse breaths threading through her lips.

The smithy siren wailed through the city, through house and home and even to the tiny dark room of a solitary dwarf that nobody had seen for months. Alone in his bed, a silent figure lay as if in sleep, troubled by unending dream. The cry sliced through stone and air and even through such dreams, for in that moment poor Dastot the soaper awoke, freed from comatose slumber! He breathed, he cried, he thanked the gods for his relief!

He burst through the door into the streets and cried praise at the miracle of his awakening, and then a crossbow bolt slammed into the wall next to his face. Dastot, of course, screamed and ran like a little girl.

Eilam ducked down behind the fortification and black barbed arrows and steel bolts rained over it and into the city beyond. He could make out figures running, screaming - hey, was that Dastot? He'd heard he'd been in a coma for years. Huh. Eilam's mind snapped back to the moment when he saw Thob, one of the furnace operators, in a bloody heap in the street. A bolt had cut through his hand, and the broken shaft of an arrow protruded from his back. It looked as if the latter had cut cleanly through his heart.

"Get to the smithy tower!" one of his fellows cried, raising his crossbow and rushing toward the Onolite platform over the magma tube.

"No!" Eilam cried out. "The walkway isn't fortified, you'll-"

A hail of arrows thudded into the markdwarf's body as he tried to cross, clattering through the many statues on the bridge. Eilam let out a bestial roar and wrenched himself to his feet, firing down at the archers; one, two, three bolts and suddenly his quiver was empty. He fumbled for one on the ground nearby, but as he tried to winch back the bolt he saw in slow motion the archer drawing back his bow, the arrow ready to sail in a perfect arc to him and cut short what little defense he could still offer.

The bow snapped, the arrow twanging harmlessly away, as an arc of steel swept through the goblin's body. Jora stepped past and into the fray of archers, her sword cleaving long swathes as not far away the dwarf Datan brought his axe down upon skull upon skull of attackers. Eilam opened his mouth to order another volley upon the goblins.

"Fire!"

Bolts rained down on the invaders, halving their numbers in a single stroke. Eilam gaped, blinking in surprise at the blonde-bearded figure at the crest of the hill, a detachment of marksdwarves behind him, each reloading their bows with mechanical efficiency. The dwarf gave the order again, and a second volley cleaned away the last of the goblins.

Eilam took off his dented helmet and scrambled down the side of the walls, running across the blood-soaked field and wiping the sweat from his brow. He scrambled up the side of the embankment and became aware that Jora and Datan were close behind. Jora asked the question first.

"Broose? Is that you?"

The blonde dwarf nodded.

"Aye, and I've brought friends, and plenty of news about Stonebreaker to boot." He frowned, looking about. "Where's Ragna?"

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A short FAQ

Why did you go?

Frustration, work commitments and frankly cowardice. One of the biggest problems I have with OK is that much of it's written in advance (or rather, the game events) and I have to keep filling in the gaps. The heavy update schedule was kind of making it difficult alongside a second three-a-week story to update too. But cowardice would be the reason I didn't say any goodbyes.

Why are you back?

~~People kept bugging me.~~ I received such a heartfelt outpouring of appreciation for the story that it rekindled my desire to write it again. Everyone hates writing to a vacuum. But this time, perhaps we'll take it a bit slower. 1-2 updates a week, or maybe short updates to make it easier.

So, let's try this again.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **October 14, 2009, 08:17:58 pm**

HES BACK. AND HE BROUGHT EPIC. HELLS YES.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Argonnek** on **October 14, 2009, 08:27:22 pm**

Yay! The story has triumphantly returned!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Petra** on **October 15, 2009, 03:14:11 pm**

*Log of Petra, back in Stonebreaker's Camp.*

*I'm not sure if Stonebreaker wants to flog me or kiss me. He's furious at losing Broose, but then again it doesn't surprise anyone. Broose was an upstart -- a good upstart. The question is, where did he come from? I think Stonebreaker is glad that I didn't desert, but that didn't save my ears from tongue lashing I received. No matter. I will KILL Broose the next time I see him.*

*I've polished my armor and buffed up my hammer. Eating dinner and writing this journal. The booze has been tasting weird lately. I inquired at the kitchens and a slave replied that plants have been hard to come by. So they've been using small animals to brew, in addition to local fauna.*

*The dreams are getting worse. I've seen Armok amidst a throne of skulls. Fields of blood ever present and the screams of the dying ringing in my ears when I wake up. I woke up screaming and scared everyone around me. One of my arches says I've got to stop drinking the bad booze. Gigin's sake. If fields of blood aren't a reason to be waking up screaming then what is? I've asked around on this Armok figure and all everyone does is shift uncomfortably and change the subject. Why is it that everyone else knows what Armok is and that I don't?*

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **October 15, 2009, 05:58:26 pm**

well Iituem nice to have u back and the 1-2 updates a week. is just fine as lon as we get them :P. this is really a good community/story fortress :)  
keep up the good work. there arent many things that stay active for ,long but yours has and we thank u for coming back with this wonderful piece :)

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **October 15, 2009, 06:40:10 pm**

But you left... and you didn't even say goodbye!

Alright, I'll take you back, Iituem.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Heavy Flak** on **October 15, 2009, 06:58:05 pm**

Welcome back, friend. Welcome back <3

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **October 16, 2009, 10:26:17 am**

Welcome back, O chronicler of Olonkulet. You're doing this much better than I could.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Nirur Torir** on **October 16, 2009, 12:07:10 pm**

Hurray! I knew my silent faith wasn't misplaced.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Duke of Nawn** on **October 18, 2009, 07:50:26 am**

\*wipes away a solitary tear of joy\*

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Aldaris** on **October 18, 2009, 11:42:48 am**

Lituem!  
Olonkulet!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Bloogonis** on **October 18, 2009, 05:34:29 pm**

hurray for the return of this great piece.  
I would vote for 1-2 awesome updates a week. just because its a good to have an update schedule that readers can mark on the calendar.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Neyvn** on **October 19, 2009, 07:50:09 am**

And the last page is reached...

FUCKING HELL!!!!

Give me more, more I scream.  
A character to boot...

Fantastic Writing I will give you that my friend. I can't handle the writing of some of the other great forts out there, but yours captured the imagination and story telling that exists within every fort each and every one of us plays...

By the way, thanks for coming back, and I hope that there is more to tell later, and that I did not finish reading an unended epic tale...

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **rickvoid** on **October 19, 2009, 09:36:19 am**

This was quite the read.

I think I missed something during the fight though. I get that Ragna "Fell" (I doubt she'll be gone long though...), but what happened to Stug?

\*Edit\* Re-read the last couple posts. He basically disappeared right after they met Datan the Elf. If Ragna's dead, they'll probably find his body near hers, a ring of Gobbo corpses testament to his rage and skill.

Or him alive, well, and her half-eaten corpse, for the gross. :D

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **October 23, 2009, 07:12:09 pm**

*Emerin's Log*  
*19th Limestone 354*

It's been a busy few days. We lost a war hero and gained... I don't know what. A war criminal? There are very mixed feelings about the town regarding what Broose did, and they don't even know the full story. Jora and Datan (*both* Datans) are under strict instructions to report to me and me alone right now. I called Frey out from the gaols and even that rat-bastard Gethro for counsel. Both of them suggested quite strongly we frame this as being the plan all along - Broose was there as a double-agent, everything he did was part of the plan, and there wasn't any real betraying at all.

Yeah, right. If he hadn't come back with so much information and those troops, I'd probably have him hammered.

Stug won't say anything, but that's no surprise. He stumbled into town the day after Jora and Datan got in with the elf. Covered in dried blood and mud, train of goblin and dwarf heads tied to his belt, first thing he does it go to the gaols and feed the damn prisoners. All I know from him is that he got trapped by rubble when the castle collapsed and fought his way out, but he didn't see Ragna go down. If anything, he seemed surprised she hadn't made it back.

I say surprised, he sort of raised an eyebrow and went off to have a few mugs of glow wine. I guess we deal with grief in our own way.

Still, Ragna's death presents real problems for us politically. She was an inspiration to start with, but worse is that I don't have anyone I can trust to fill her job. The most military-competent soldier we have is Broose, and right now I don't trust him an inch above sergeant (which is what I cut him back down to). He's subject to the marksdwarf leader, Eilam, now. Kid proved himself in battle, but we lost a few dwarves during that sortie. Danielle's ordered the statue bridge properly walled now; we won't be losing any more people that way.

Still, I can't use Broose and the new military captain is too busy handling his own patchy squads. I sure as Deler's oil can't use any of the troops he brought into the city; they've been sent to Khain's watchtower six miles away. Frey is still incarcerated (and I think I honestly prefer him there), Gethro refuses to do any honest work, I daren't take up the job along with the Mayoral duties. Fath expressed an interest, but I listened to about two minutes of his propositions before rejecting him outright. Constructing a two-hundred foot tall mechanical dwarf with a battleaxe is not a viable option for defence.

So the question is; Jora, Datan or Stug? Which of them do I really trust to hold the role?

*Evening note:* Received a communique from Danielle. One of the jewellers has decided to commemorate the battle by sculpting something out of stone. I say 'decided', she's done the usual trick of holding the brickworks hostage until someone brings her a large enough block of bauxite to work with. I think I need to have words with Kel again about the 'free samples' he's giving to the work crews.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **rickvoid** on **October 23, 2009, 07:26:25 pm**

It's back! With Stug! Horray!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **October 23, 2009, 07:39:24 pm**

*Broken steel, shattered bone,*  
*Further we march, our path unknown.*  
*Silent battles beneath the sky,*  
*March overground, just to die.*

*Far away, from our home,*  
*A sea of death, with bloody foam.*  
*Axes flash, broadsword swing,*

*Fight for the glory of our king.*

*Never falter, never die,  
Roaring our ancient battlecry.  
Bones bleaching beneath the sun,  
Rivers red with blood will run.*

*Turn back, its too late,  
Crush the foes with your hate.  
Never surrender, never give,  
Only through battle can you live.*

*Finally, the time has come,  
Hear the pounding of the drum.  
Fight till your last breath,  
Serve your king unto death.*

*When in battle you will fall,  
You will hear the ancient call.  
Stir your soul, meet your lord,  
Armok calls you to lend your sword.*

*After death, there is no peace,  
Still you fight, with no release.  
Break the ranks of the foul Soulsmith,  
Let your name pass into myth.*

*Yet you cant fight anymore,  
Survivor of a forgotten war.  
Hear the war, smell the blood,  
Taste the steel, a rising flood.  
Nothing to lose, anymore,  
Fall to the tides of this fell war.*

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **rickvoid** on **October 23, 2009, 08:41:45 pm**

I can only reply to the above in the most ancient and accepted manner.

WAAAAAAAAAAAAARGH!!!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **October 25, 2009, 11:26:59 am**

*Danielle's Inventory*  
*24th Limestone, 354*

Astesh has finally left the blockworks, and has a brand new bed to show for it. Granted, the bed is carved entirely out of bauxite with a depiction of an historic battle in cameo on cave lobster shell, but we all agree that it's a very nice bed. Astesh was mumbling something or other incoherently about 'ergo-gnomes', so I suppose it must be divine inspiration. Or gnomish inspiration.

The trade wagons arrived today, as well. The Liason, Datan, managed to get one of our dwarves to carry a message back to the Searing Crypts. The wagon leader seemed... surprised.

-----

The elf stepped off the lip of the wagon, garbed in a rich spidersilk brocade and deep royal purple coat, trousers and slippers. Like all his kind he was a picture of health and beauty; tall, graceful and ever-youthful, with immaculate hair and stunning blue eyes. His features were marred only by a gentle furrowing of the brow.

"Where is he?" the elf demanded as Emerin approached the wagons. The mayor, wanting little to do with the affairs of elves, simply gestured to the currently vacant Guard Captain's apartments. Blustering past the small crowd of curious dwarves, the elf wrenched open the stylish bauxite doors and gasped, the furrow of his brow turning to a mask of horror.

The creature that stood in the doorway was undeniably an elf, and yet no Elf could consider him kin. Dressed not dissimilarly to his fellow, save that his clothes were in deep prairie rose scarlet and fashioned as of a higher rank, the elf still looked imposing, even handsome. Nevertheless, the elemental grace of his kin seemed to have left him. His hair had grown paler, robbed of the richness and vigour of youth, and his skin seemed thinner and more translucent. Faint wrinkles were visible around his eyes and lips and there was the suggestion of bags beneath the former. The greatest physical change was to his irises, a pale scarlet to match his clothes, but the most noticeable change was to his expression.

Where elves had regality, Datan showed dominance. Where elves had dignity, Datan showed coldness. His lips pressed back into a perpetual sneer, his eyes narrowed slightly in continual suspicion and barely-restrained aggression. With barely a handful of changes to his expressions, Datan's beauty had been robbed of him, replaced by cruel, dark power.

"By the Force," the visiting elf breathed.

"Yes, it was," intoned Datan coldly. "Embrace me, Sarvesh." The elf did so, albeit after a moment's hesitation. Datan clasped him tightly, if stiffly, then released him.

"So it is true," Sarvesh said, his voice tinged with awe and fear. "You took the forbidden step."

"And lost my right to be known as an Elf, yes," Datan confirmed. "My need was great, however, and we have given up so much already in the name of peace with the dwarves. How are things in the Mountainhomes?"

"Strained. Heads are rolling over the recent losses, but the army's mobilising for retaliation. Who are this lot? This place isn't on any of our maps."

"Strays, scavengers and criminals. Exiles, but I owe them. It's not on the maps because I kept it secret. Now it needs to be."

"Why keep it secret? The Queen will throw a fit when she finds out."

"It was a good place to shift the liquor surplus, and if she wants to throw a fit then she can throw it at me!" Datan snapped. "But as far as she or anyone else in the Crypts needs to know, it's just a struggling outpost. If I hear mention of walls, or guards, or especially the damned militia they've got set up, I'll hunt down each and every member of this caravan myself! The last thing the kingdom needs is to believe there's another threat out here; Her Majesty will need all her troops just fighting off Stonebreaker and the goblins."



Sarvesh pursed his lips, looking around the little walled town and at all the short, dirty dwarves glaring up at him. He glanced upward as well; three dwarves were apparently just lounging on the nearby town walls, but their crossbows were quite visible. He sighed and raised his hands.

"As you wish, Datan, but I cannot promise it will be without consequence. For you or this place." He signalled to the wagons to proceed toward the covered market in the brightly coloured Nishan chapel. "For now, join me, brother. I am sure you have much to say."

"Not so much as I do not," Datan remarked, but followed the wagons regardless.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Keita** on **October 26, 2009, 09:57:25 am**

wow this is amazing stuff Iituem!

Is khain suffering from a spinal injury? I can't remember if it was really bad of just a mashed up arm.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **October 26, 2009, 12:48:00 pm**

How's Loksvig doing?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Nirur Torir** on **October 31, 2009, 08:21:27 pm**

The story is still good: Worthy of praise and requests for more.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **rickvoid** on **November 02, 2009, 07:25:31 pm**

Hmmm... I wonder if an ethereal Ragna will show up to visit her Padawan, eventually.

:D

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **ousire** on **November 03, 2009, 04:37:04 pm**

yay! i come back to this place after a while to find out that updates had resumed on my favorite story! double yay that im involved somehow, even if all i did was set off the alarm!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **November 07, 2009, 02:50:20 pm**

*8th Sandstone, 354*

Loksvig pounded on the door of the shack. Somewhere within a sort of muffled crash resounded, which he took to be sufficient permission to enter. He pushed the heavy chalk door and it swung open soundlessly on perfectly balanced bearings. Loksvig marvelled at the lack of uncomfortable squeaking that usually accompanied such doors opening and made a note to ask Fath what he was using as a lubricant.

The engineer himself appeared to be buried in a collection of stone and iron pieces of machinery, brass tubing and steel springs. Loksvig set the tray of crumpets and hot glow wine down on Fath's table and reached into the pile to pull the engineer out. Fath blinked, brushing small cogs out of his beard as he surfaced.

"Well hello, Loksvig!" he beamed. "What brings you here?" Loksvig thumbed toward the tray of crumpets.

"Emerin mentioned not having seen you in a couple of weeks," he explained. "We were wondering if you might have gone a bit, uh, moody."

"No, no, nothing like that," Fath said, dragging himself out of the array of parts to the table. He picked up one of the crumpets. "Redbulb flour, eh? Nasty, nasty stuff, but worth it for the crumpets." He raised it to his mouth and paused. "Did, uh, Mincewind make these?"

"No, no, these are compliments of Urgash." Fath breathed a sigh of relief and bit down on the crumpet, washing it down with some of the hot glow wine. "Kel provided the wine, though."

Fath blanched for a moment, then shrugged and swallowed anyway.

"At least I'll sleep straight," he muttered. Loksvig tilted his head at the pile of machinery.

"What are you working on there?"

"Oh, that? Thinking machine, of course. Trying to puzzle out the designs on that boat." Fath hobbled over to the pile of parts and dragged out a small stone box full of small plates with runes on them and a clockwork abacus on the top. He tapped it appreciatively.

"This can work out sums," he said proudly. Loksvig tilted his head.

"That sounds interesting. Can it do them faster?"

"Not as such, no. It takes more time to put the numbers in that it would to work out the sum right now."

"Huh." Loksvig shook his head. "Anyway, I came to talk about the power problem."

"Ah, yes!" Fath said, his eyes lighting up. "Has that dungeon master murdered your wife and taken her place yet?"

A brief, awkward silence followed.

"Not... that... power problem," Loksvig said, coughing. "I meant the need for powered machinery. A number of your defensive sketches need a lot of power. I've tweaked them to account, but it looks like we're going to need to dam the stream to do that. In fact, I'm not sure we even have enough space to do that, small as the stream is."

"Then damn the dams!" Fath proclaimed. "We will draw power from the very air itself!" Loksvig winced.

"You don't mean..."

"Yes! Windmills! Windmills, as far as the eye can see!"

"Fath, we don't actually have that much space we can put windmills on, you know. I mean, not without it being a horrible eyesore."

"Then we will create space!" Fath stood up as tall as he could (not very) and swept his wine and crumpet-stained robes dramatically.  
"Come, Loksvig! Let us harvest the wind!"

-----

Slower updates than I had hoped, but with good reason. I have a potential new job coming up that will be comfortably eating 12 hours a day if I get it (the commute is pretty horrible), but what has really been eating my time about that is the required reading for the technical assessment for the six-month training program; a book thicker than my wrist called 'UNIX Shells by Example'.

My getting this job is, incidentally, completely fraudulent. As far as I'm aware, a *grep* is a kind of beast that likes to *bash* *awks* for food. During lean times, it performs a sort of non-destructive editing of its environment informally known as *sed*, typically on the back of a GNU living on Solaris. Its larger and more expansive cousin, *egrep*, subsists on a diet of *korn*, but has trouble with escaping certain metacharacters, who feed on it as a standard source of prey.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Aldaris** on **November 07, 2009, 02:56:49 pm**

Yay! Mincewind! I'd forgotten about her...  
She got relieved of cement mixing duties, right? Maybe get her to work on making Discworld-stlye Dwarf Bread?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Argonnek** on **November 07, 2009, 03:39:12 pm**

Quote from: Iituem on November 07, 2009, 02:50:20 pm  
My getting this job is, incidentally, completely fraudulent. As far as I'm aware, a *grep* is a kind of beast that likes to *bash* *awks* for food. During lean times, it performs a sort of non-destructive editing of its environment informally known as *sed*, typically on the back of a GNU living on Solaris. Its larger and more expansive cousin, *egrep*, subsists on a diet of *korn*, but has trouble with escaping certain metacharacters, who feed on it as a standard source of prey.

This makes it sound like we've developed software that feeds upon other software. Is AI already here? Because it certainly sounds like it. (I have no programming knowledge whatsoever)

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Keita** on **November 07, 2009, 03:46:30 pm**

I hope you have luck in getting this job Iituem

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Petra** on **November 15, 2009, 08:14:59 pm**

Need moar updates. Itieum, where arrreee you? :'(

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **February 20, 2010, 08:03:17 pm**

*Jora's Journal*  
*13th Moonstone, 354*

Ragna's alive.

She came at the head of a column of goblins, a couple of dwarves amongst them. Not Stonebreaker's lot; the dwarves were feral, beardless. Snatcher-kin. They used to tell us stories about them in the mines. All the strength of a dwarf, all the cunning, but the malice of the gobbers, the hatred twisted so bad they call it love. Onol's tin beard, I hope to never have to face one of those myself.

I watched things from the parapet with the marksdwarves. We thought she'd pulled a Broose on us, turned to the enemy, until we realised they were chasing her, trying to pincer her between two groups. Chasing and losing. She doesn't fight the way I do. For me, the sabre's a skill, an art-form. I take pride in a clean arc, a graceful cut. She's a soldier, like Broose. Technique isn't important, so long as it gets the job done.

The first of the snatcher-kin was down the moment the pincer closed, both legs cut out in a short half-slash. She barrelled through the gobber shock troops, grabbed one of them and flung it straight into an archer's chest to stun it before she cut its head off. Marksgoblin got her in the shoulder - she pulled it out, stabbed him in the eye, kept going.

The whole thing was over by the time Broose and Stug got to the field. Broose held back and shot at the gobber reserves, Stug got out there with his spear and just started stabbing and stabbing, screaming curses in that foul tongue the gobbers use.

Gods, I'd almost forgot he was one of them. He speaks so dwarfish now. You'd almost think he was a real person.

They all dogpiled onto him, so thick I couldn't see him. Ragna started going for him, but before she got there he just threw them all off, shaking them like a pup after the rain. After that he jsut started ripping into them, crippling their hands, their feet, making them scream with pain and rolling over. He didn't even set about to finishing them off until all of them were lying screaming on the field. When he did, the way he looked... like it was a duty, like he was bored of it. A clean stab for each one, through the heart then let them bleed out onto the stones.

Everyone crowded around her in the evening, of course. You could barely move in the hall for dwarves. Turns out she got trapped under the rubble at Meadowfort, took her a day to dig herself out. Got lost after that, ended up in the north part of the desert living off prickly pear juice. That's where she ran into the gobber nation.

They're calling themselves the 'Evil Thief', led by some she-demon. It's them that Stonebreaker's been slaving gobbers from, and they crushed Milecamps to make room for her. There's an occupation force at Lanternwebs too, now. This war just got a lot harder on everyone.

But at least she's back. That's giving us all a lot of hope.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **February 20, 2010, 08:29:53 pm**

Me email pestering has worked!  
SO MUCH JOY :D

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **February 20, 2010, 09:38:36 pm**

yay Olunkulet is back!!!!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Aldaris** on **February 21, 2010, 04:20:36 am**

\o/  
Woo!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **February 21, 2010, 07:34:35 pm**

*28th Obsidian, 354*

"No denying it now," Emerin sighed glumly. "We're a town."

She took a draught from her beer, swinging her legs back and forth from her perch on the town wall. The walls had been undergoing extension for some months now but the flooring on the southern edge had still not been added in, leaving a thin perch upon which she, Fath and Loksvig were sat, looking over the city. Well, either the city or one of two massive trenches depending on your angle.

"At least the south side excavation's going well," Loksvig added cheerfully. "By the end of the year we might even have the housing in there we've been after. All the magnetite deposits help too, mind. It would go rather faster if you released Frey from the cells."

"You trust him?" Emerin asked.

"Not a whit," Loksvig replied, "but he's one of our best besides you. Maybe you could set it as a prison detail."

"Not a bad idea. How are things on the mechanical side, Fath?"

"Weel, lassie," Fath explained, "as y'know the initial attempts to use the river's force on the north side o' the toon wouldnae have had mooch effect (and didnae, at that) so we've had to abandon those trenches in favour of a more 'direct' approach."

"Which in clear dwarfish means?" Emerin asked.

"We've dammed the river from beneath!" Fath proclaimed cheerfully. "Tunnelled in while she was frozen, built a solid dam under the surface and laid out designs for a waterfall. Oh, and you'll be glad to know I finally got Danielle to move on the worst o' her designs for a surface city."

"Oh?" said Loksvig. Fath nodded furiously.

"She still insists on us livin' aboveground for the most part, maintain the 'natural appeal' o' the mountain, but I reckon we can get away with extending the space in the mountain through natural-looking caverns. We can set up flowing rivers, water features, the works! Just like home."

"I have to say, I would look forward to a decent cavern again," Emerin said wistfully. "There's time I spend down in the Deleran shrine just to remember what it feels like to have a thousand tons of rock over my head. How are we doing for power on the magma pipe project?"

"Run into a major pitfall, and it's the same as ever," Loksvig admitted with a frown.

"Wood?" Emerin asked. Loksvig gave a nod.

"Loyaraafe's traders will help, of course, but we're going to have to wait for the human caravan to get enough for our needs. Metal and stone can't take the forces we need in axles, see? The metal's not springy enough and the stone's too brittle, not to mention how much metal we'd need."

"We do need to get that magma up topside," Emerin insisted. "I'm getting a lot of complaints from the Onolites about their forge temple being the last to be finished, if you can call that creepy boneyard of Gigin's a temple. The Nakasians keep buying up the inner part of the town too, calling for revitalisation and what not. It's a bloody pain, is what it is. They've bought up the whole blockworks and are starting to build a temple around it, stocking it with food, booze, who knows what else."

"Surely that's a good thing, stockpiling food for the future?" Loksvig asked. Emerin shrugged.

"Just seems to me they've got a lot of power if they ever get desperate. I don't know, maybe it won't be my problem then. Still hoping for a retirement this year, but frankly with the war scouring the old country I doubt there'd be much point." She sighed again and pulled Loksvig close to her, staring out at the setting sun.

"I guess this is home now."

-----

I'm trying to get through to the point at which I had played up to (nearly 6-8 months ago now) before I had to freeze and write story, because the inability to actually *play* the damned fortress was what was killing it for me. Therefore expect updates to be rather brief until we get to there - fortunately, it's close.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Lidhuin** on **February 22, 2010, 12:17:10 am**

Wonderful story I'm reading here. Love the details, love the way you shaped it in the beginning. I'll definitely be reading more of this when I have time.

If you need more characters, how about this one:

Name: Huin  
Profession: Peasant  
Crime: A useless recruit, he was constantly posted on prison duty and never got around to sparring. One day, while on duty, he felt hungry and decided to head to the foodstores. On that day, a great number of prisoners escaped, some other guards were poisoned or shot and killed and mechanical defects ran amok. Huin never noticed any of this, as he was busy gorging himself in absolutely delicious biscuits that tasted a bit like chicken.

When he came back, he was put under lifetime arrest for treason. Useless as he was, the judges were too busy sentencing other, more useful people to death and hammerstrikes, so Huin was never sentenced to death. One day, seeing his chance, he duck into a barrel of old stale ale, which was promptly thrown out through the sewage system. Surviving his ordeal, he traveled the lands towards the nearest criminal place he knew of. Made up of, amusingly enough, the same criminals he let go so many years ago.

That is going to cause some... interesting reactions from the dwarves of Olonkulet. And Lituem, if you feel you need more comic relief, how about a Mincewind mention for fun and profit?

*20th Granite, 355*

The same nightmare. Always the same nightmare.

A battle. Bolts, crossfire everywhere. Struggling through the melee, through the press of shadows, he raised his axe and cut. Shadowy figures fell apart, but there in the distance he could see one clearly, a shining silver apparition. He fought towards it, the edge of his blade growing brighter against the shades. Suddenly they came, the violet figures. Three of them, from different sides, catching him on the mountain's edge. The first crumbled into wisps of shadow as his blade passed through it. Another caught him on the shoulder, but he shrugged through the pain and sliced away the top of its head. A well-placed kick and the third was down. He raised his axe to end it-

And then it happened, as it always did. A bolt of black light, an impossible thing, passing through his chest from behind. He turned, saw the shimmering silver figure standing above him, glaring brightly even as the darkness grew. The silvered dwarf seemed to regard him for a moment, then it became liquid and drained into the ground. He fell, tumbling through the shadows toward the endless sea of blue mist below...

Datan breathed in sharply. He looked around, blinking, his muscles tense for attack. He sat up, rubbing his face and moaning softly. It was clearer now, clearer in his mind than ever before. He spared a sad glance at the sleeping figure of Jora beside him, then sighed and fell back onto the bed, running his fingers through his hair.

Then the horn sounded and everything went to the underworld.

One of the marksdwarves had seen the first group approach, a dwarf and pikegoblins sneaking up on the lone miner, Ascubis, as he was trying to perform a little late night digging on the foundations for the southern district of the town. The scout had cried out in time for Ascubis to dodge the arrow the enemy dwarf sent toward him and start running for the town gates. He almost made it before another cry called him back. Another dwarf, the mason Eshtan, had also stayed on to work. The pikegoblins had him cornered, edging toward him with their spears. Letting out a cry of fury, Ascubis lifted his pick and charged toward him.

Perhaps Eshtan might have lived a few moments longer had he not attacked, had he not scared them into stabbing rashly so they could focus on the mad miner approaching them - but it is unlikely. The pikegoblins turned Eshtan swiftly into a fresh sieve, then attempted to do the same to their second foe.

Ascubis proved a little harder to manage. With a mighty swing of his pick, he shattered the shafts of their weapons, then began laying into them afresh with the sharp end of the tool, mining fresh seams - into their skulls and chest cavities. Oblivious of the bolts from the dwarven defenders around him, even of Jora's arrival and decapitation of the bowdwarf who very nearly shot him in the back, Ascubis dug deeper and deeper into the mounds of grisly flesh around him, immersing himself in an orgy of gore.

Unseen until it was too late was the second squad, an elite pack of bowgoblins sneaking toward the new apartment complex as their pike-wielding brethren served as a distraction. By the time they were noticed, the first arrow had already planted itself in a dwarven chest. Terrified citizens began running across the Onolite bridge in an effort to save themselves, but the goblins merely shot them through the gaps in the statues flanking the edifice. Iden, the captain of the marksdwarf defenders, called for his squad to take cover as they began their own return fire.

Datan rushed toward the goblin archers, axe at the ready to save the day. His breath felt cold with rage at the attacks, his chest beaded with sweat. Perhaps, had he not been so intent upon his goal, the axegoblins would not have ambushed him so easily. As it was three of them sprung up from hiding, each concealed behind rocks on the mountain's steep slope. They closed in on Datan, hacking savagely as he did his best to try and fend them off with his shield.

*The world went grey...*

*And suddenly they weren't goblins at all, but three violet, shimmering figures, their eyes burning with purple light. They had not axes, but blades stemming from their very arms, and in Datan's hand his axe had become a thing of bright fire and fury. He saw them move to attack and then he foresaw where they would move - no, he remembered where they would move. And he struck.*

The first goblin's scream was cut short as its jaw crumbled away beneath the mad dwarf's swing. His chest and guts followed suit. The other two froze momentarily in fear; the dwarf no longer seemed to even notice them, as if he were someplace else, some place in his mind filled with death and horror. That moment was enough, as the second's arm came away even as he tried to swing. The third, Olngo, pushed his former companion in front to catch the axe's next blow, but lost his grip on his weapon and cowered before the bloodstained terror before him.

*Datan paid the second spirit little heed as it unravelled into the shadows. He raised his axe to end the cowering third and then-*

*Then he remembered, and swung around instead.*

The marksdwarf sneaking up behind him let out a gasp of anguish and surprise as the blade bit into his hip. Almost on reflex, the crossbow discharged.

*The silvery dwarf extended his hand, and a spear of black light passed through Datan's chest, stealing away his life. He staggered weakly, brought up the axe, and as it passed through the dwarf the apparition melted into shimmering silver.*

Olngo screamed as the halves of the marksdwarf tumbled down the mountain's side, but his scream was cut short when he was, and his head rolled down along with it. And then, soon after, did the dwarf who had killed him.

*The blue shadows swam up to greet him now, promising their cool embrace. He could feel dirt and rock, his body tumbling over them, but all that felt like a passing dream now. Here, in this place of shadows, he flowed like crystal water toward the sea below.*

*Not yet.*

*He didn't know if he thought it, or if the thought was placed into his mind. He grabbed with one hand, and his fingers found purchase. There was no breath in his chest, there never would be again, but somehow he found the will to hold on. And bit by bit he dragged against the rock, the blue mists coming up and flowing into the holes where his chest had been, giving him strength, spurring him on.*



Stug stabbed furiously, trying to fend off the waves of goblins crashing against him. Where were they all coming from?! He twisted, shoved, but they just kept piling against him, dragging and clawing with their bare, dirty fingernails, blotting out the light. He lost grip on his spear, heard it fall to the ground somewhere away from him. He dived toward it, but the wrestlers piled atop of him, crushing him beneath their weight. In the moment before he died, he could see nothing but their mud and bloodstained green bodies, smell nothing but their sweat and hear nothing but their curses.

And then instead he heard their screams. Light flooded back into his world as burly arms pulled them away, freeing Stug's arm so he could reach and grab the spear he had lost. He wriggled out of the desperate melee, stabbing and punching where he could until he could catch sight of his saviour. And there he was.

Datan, the bright starlight gleaming against the slick blood on his platemail, cutting away the goblin horde like so much wheat to a farmer's scythe. He fought as if in a trance, as if in some other place, some other more beautiful world. And even Stug could see that he would never return. Two holes had been pierced in his breastplate; one at the front, one at the back. The path would have passed through both lungs. There was no way he could have been alive.

Stug drove his spear through the throat of the last greenskin and turned to his companion. He called out to him, but he did not hear. Instead Datan trudged across the barren rock toward the tiny brass shrine on the town's outskirts, dragging his axe at his side.

*The light shone brightly from the citadel, a gleaming blue edifice of glass and cobalt stone. Datan could feel it upon his skin, a cool, refreshing sensation like fresh spring water. He trudged towards it, and some part of him knew it was hard, but he did not feel it. His axe fell from his fingers and dissolved into light. He passed through the great archway of the tower and stood before the brilliant light between the brass pillars, basking in its beauty. And then the story ended.*

Stug watched in silence as his friend knelt before circle of rude brass pillars. Datan seemed to look upward at something in the sky, as if in recognition. Then he slumped sideways to the ground, and he moved no more.

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Far too long coming, this one. Pretty much accurate, though. Datan got ambushed during the attacks, held his own easily against the axegoblins but got a bolt through both lungs. I thought he was done for then, but he followed the marksdwarf that had killed him all the way down the mountainside (with two red lungs, I might add) and killed him, then dragged himself all the way up to the top of the mountain to kill the goblins ambushing Stug. He lasted about a day longer before finally dying, keeping himself alive through sheer legendary Toughness.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **May 28, 2010, 06:10:39 pm**

Fuck. Yes.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Virroken** on **May 28, 2010, 07:04:14 pm**

Christmas in May.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Argonnek** on **May 28, 2010, 08:31:02 pm**

Great! I love this story. I'm glad it has returned.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **ragnarok97071** on **May 28, 2010, 09:46:35 pm**

I wish Acceptance.  
Name: Baldur  
Crime: Strangling a superior officer to death(5 Years), accusing a superior officer of elfishness (100 hammerstrikes and life imprisonment)  
Profession: Wrestler/Hammerdwarf

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **May 29, 2010, 10:43:28 am**

*Loksvig's Notes, 1st Slate 355*

Busy couple of weeks. We lost more than one good dwarf in the attack, and I lost a friend. I remember the day Datan first arrived, barely able to stand with the rest of the refugees. Never told him, but we were all proud of him for sticking with the military. He was an inspiration, a true dwarf and a terror to the gobbers. The place just won't be the same without him.

The new hotshot kid in the military, the one that has Broose's old job. He got hit too, arrow broke his forearm. By some miracle, didn't cut open his arteries, but he'll be out of commission for a while. Worse, he lost his wife in the attack. Won't talk about it, won't stick to bed rest. Just drilling the militia harder and harder. I guess loss takes people in different ways.

We got more people, too. Refugees from the war going on out there, even a couple of old cons back from the prison break all those years ago. Gods above, has it been that long? Emerin's off her feet trying to deal with them all, she and Dani have been locked up in the office all week just sorting the paperwork out. Not that we have paper, mind.

One piece of good news, work-wise. The stream thawed out again, and the dam we set up has started redirecting the flow. Now all we need to do is finish hollowing out the reservoir chambers and we'll be set.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **scuba** on **June 07, 2010, 06:39:51 pm**

wow that was kool and sad at the same time. ascubis did alright for a miner too bad he couldnt save the mason

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - War Machine (No, really.)**  
Post by: **Petra** on **July 08, 2010, 12:24:55 am**

*Journal of Petra:*

*I am writing again at dinner. No one bothers me anymore because they think I'm cursed. I don't know if this is true. I think word has reached Stonebreaker about the latest dream and that strange symbol on my head. He looks at me strangely, considering. Plotting. I would be afraid, except after so much killing and raiding, I can't feel anymore. I can't. I have no compassion. Just a savage, external, and wild pleasure in killing. Sometimes, I hear the chanting in the day. Armok. Armok. Then it fades away when I realize what I'm hearing.*

*Life keeps going. I keep sparring. I raid. I kill innocents. I don't die. I charge into battle, and I don't die. I have my hammer and my armor. My archers listen to me, still. That might change though. My captain wanted to change the name of my squad to "Doomdreamers" except I nearly killed him with my hammer, then I realized what I was doing and stopped. I promised to kill him if he talked. Scared the shit out of everyone. It almost breaks my own heart to realize that I've grown cold on the inside. Stone cold killer. That's what I am: a stone cold killer. I never wanted to turn out like this.*

*When I was little, back in the Mountainhomes, I thought I'd be a craftsdwarf, or a guard watching a coin vault. Maybe I'd even aspire to a master smithy or a some renowned bard. If my parents could see me now: convicted prisoner turned war criminal.*

*Another one of those damned nightmares. This one was the worst so far.*

*I was before Armok this time. He sat on a throne of skulls. It leaked under his weight. I was knee deep in blood and it's stench was overpowering. I was in my armor and held my hammer. The screams are reverbarating outside and in my head. He spoke to me, wickedly seductive, like blood-lust in battle. Irresistable. Undeniable. Desirable, almost. He asks me I like what he has made me. I ask him what he is. He laughs and it sounds like shattering armor. His mirth toward suffering is legendary. Armok told me that I amused him, that my horror amuses him, since I am his slave. He looks at me, with that mirth -- so natural, considering what he is -- and brands me with his eyes. He asks me why I don't enjoy the suffering of others too? Why don't you, he asked, surrender and bask in the strength I gave you? I woke up screaming and screaming and crying, clutching my head and with blood streaming down my face, and begging Armok not to use me -- I didn't want to be his tool. I think I woke up that entire section of the barracks.*

*As a result I have a mark on my head. A fell rune. No one will tell me what it means. The goblins are careful not to so much as touch me. The dwarves make the evil eye sign in my presence. They all keep muttering about curses. If this keeps up, I don't know what I'm going to do.*

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines.**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **July 14, 2010, 01:50:38 pm**

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*14th Slate, 353*

***Armok.***

Thirty years and not a word. Not a whisper or thought. Yet there it had been in the dream. The great toad, the creatures crying out the name. *Armok, Armok, Armok!* It had been the only barely intelligible word amongst their incomprehensible gibber. They had screamed it while they held the knives, slitting throat after throat of her elven companions while she lay bound to the rock. *Armok*, and *Jreengus*, two words that would just keep coming back.

Ragna ran the cold, wet rag over her face, glaring back at the shadows in her room. Her bed lay dishevelled from her sudden awakening. It had been after her trial, her time with the Elves. She had been sentenced to stay with them for seven long years, to pay penance for the deeds of her kind. She had learned peace from them, both inner and outer. She had learned the ways of the Force that permeated all living things. She had learned even some of the secrets of their magic, and the terrible price it wrought if used without respect. And, at the end, she learned fear.

In the seventh and final year of her sentence, Ragna had journeyed to the edge of the forest with a number of her Elven friends, not far from both human and dwarven lands. They had heard rumours of dwarves, humans and elves going missing in the region for months, but had only recently connected them with tales of a kobold cavern nearby. Suspecting a small group of kobolds preying on travellers, they had gone directly to the cave with a force of huntsman.

They had underestimated their foe in every way. Traps assailed them from the moment they entered, vicious devices aimed at maiming rather than killing. Before they had even laid eyes on a kobold, they had been ensnared by nets or their limbs had been broken to an elf. When their scaly captors brought them to their destination, the sheer scope of it both bewildered and terrified.

A great cavern had been channelled out of the rock, the roof supported by massive pillars of stone arranged in concentric rings. The cavern was cut into descending layers, each fitted with dozens of smaller pillars. Above it all, the carved image of a giant toad glared down with bulbous eyes. It was when Ragna saw the gutters running from the base of the pillars downward to the central pit that she understood its horrific purpose. Scores of victims, human, elven, dwarven, goblin and even kobold alike had been chained to the pillars, ready to take part in whatever unspeakable design the kobolds had planned. Not that it was difficult to guess; ancient bloodstains had etched themselves into the rock. Whomever had built this place had done so countless generations before its current inhabitants.

Ragna and her companions were chained to the pillars and the hundreds of kobolds gathered began to sing in their strange, sibilant tongue. Their priests strode from level to level, slitting throats and ankles so the blood drained through the grates in the bottom-most pit. Ragna was bound at the topmost level and it was by sheer chance that she was doomed to die last of all. At first she could not bear to watch the slaughter, but eventually she forced herself to look at what all this bloodshed was due to accomplish.

At the very centre of the pit, a hazy figure of smoke had appeared. With each death the figure sharpened, coming closer and closer into focus. The thing was the size of a kobold and of a similar shape, yet its skin seemed to be made of a black, shiny metal, not unlike that of a beetle's shell. The image grew clearer, almost as if this thing was becoming more real, down to the long, sharp black claws and the evil, burning yellow eyes.

The last priest was working his way along the line towards Ragna. The creature was very nearly complete and all around she could hear the screams.

*Jreengus! Jreengus! Jreengus!*

Ragna closed her eyes and waited for the blade that would take her out of this world and bring the beast into it. It never came.

A mace had crushed the shaman's head as he approached, and a storm of dwarves had charged into the arena, scattering the terrified legions of kobolds. The shadowy figure had given Ragna one final glare, its gleaming yellow eyes burning themselves into her memory, then it had faded from existence. Of the hundreds gathered in the summoning chamber, only Ragna had survived. The dwarves brought her home and she was re-integrated into society once again.

All this, she knew. All this, she had dreamed again. But why now?

## Chapter Five: Bloodlines

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Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **July 14, 2010, 01:51:16 pm**

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Alright. Let's roll this old girl back out and see if we can't move on with her. >\_>

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **scuba** on **July 14, 2010, 02:53:06 pm**

back again? FINALLY!!!! i've missed Olonkulet

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **Jim Groovester** on **July 14, 2010, 03:09:36 pm**

\*gasp\*  
  
It's (possibly) back!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **Argonnek** on **July 14, 2010, 06:26:08 pm**

Huzzah! All hail Iituem!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **Eagle** on **July 14, 2010, 07:15:18 pm**

Though hell itself may hold us back, steel will lead us through.  
  
Lets rock.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **Petra** on **July 14, 2010, 10:14:36 pm**

Yay!

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **Chaoseed** on **July 15, 2010, 05:28:22 pm**

Wow! Something's finally...ah...occurring?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **Mangled** on **July 17, 2010, 04:53:53 pm**

This helped kill my Saturday.  
Hangover did the rest.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **Petra** on **August 05, 2010, 01:51:11 pm**

Seriously, how many times do we have to CPR this story?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **scuba** on **August 05, 2010, 02:49:17 pm**

i know he keeps getting our hopes up then drops them :(

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **Remalle** on **July 05, 2011, 04:05:40 pm**

Epic lolbump away! Sorry, but this thread deserves to be bumped, if only to let new readers see it.  
I don't care what Iituem says about his writing, this is a beautifully written masterpiece. Is there any chance this will be resurrected at all? Even just for it to have an actual ending?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **scuba** on **July 05, 2011, 04:17:54 pm**

hopefully. i enjoyed reading this and i really miss it

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **Petra** on **July 05, 2011, 06:06:25 pm**

I miss the story.  
But alas, I have lost hope.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **scuba** on **July 05, 2011, 07:08:49 pm**

i think we all have petra :'(

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **July 06, 2011, 10:54:05 am**

Unfortunately, I no longer have the save for OK, so I can't restart it anyhow. =/  
  
I might be willing to do a new fort once the next version of DF comes out, though. And I admit, I miss doing OK as well. =/

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **Remalle** on **July 06, 2011, 11:10:24 am**

:-\ That's unfortunate. If by "new fort" you mean starting from scratch, would you at least write up an ending for this one? Just for some sort of closure, even if it is wholly from your head?

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **Iituem** on **July 06, 2011, 11:35:17 am**

I could. On the other hand, I spoke a little too soon about the save. I've found it, though it is for good old 40d, and the game itself is broken.

What I *could* do is try and recreate the game in DF2010. I've found the world seed and could probably try and locate the original build site.

~~Still, we have options.~~

- ~~1) I try and get a working copy of 40d and play out more OK.~~
- ~~2) Put the beast to rest with an epilogue and do something new.~~
- ~~3) Restart OK as a DF2010 game, either from scratch or trying to rebuild the structures and replace the characters to get to our previous point.~~

~~Note that in all three cases updates will still be weekly rather than daily if I do it -- life is busy.~~

Alas, nay. The world will not regenerate in DF2010, not the same. Seeds don't carry through precisely, after all the changes. Looks like an epilogue it is...

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **Argonnek** on **July 06, 2011, 12:00:16 pm**

Oh well. It's been a great ride, and your writing is amazing as always. I eagerly await the ending of this fort.

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **scuba** on **July 06, 2011, 01:20:34 pm**

its a shame. maybe your next story will have better luck. i shall wait for it

Title: **Re: Olonkulet - Bloodlines**  
Post by: **Petra** on **July 14, 2011, 06:58:03 pm**

Iituem, an epilogue would be welcome.